

## ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: CULTURAL TOURISM:  
UNEARTHING SUDANS HIDDEN GEMS

Alla Elmahadi, Masters of Architecture and Real  
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By 2027, Sudan is anticipated to attract over 1.2 million visitors from across the globe, annually, for the purposes of tourism. Clouded by issues of political instability and poverty, the country is finding a new path for the future by embracing its rich past. Visitors are traveling to many of the country's cities to experience an authentic and exciting cultural tourism experience. Through the ideas of Cultural Tourism, this thesis aims to explore a regional application of architecture; one that provokes an intimate relationship between memory and modernity, celebrating culture, heritage and geography.

# CULTURAL TOURISM: UNEARTHING SUDANS HIDDEN GEMS

by

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## Foreword

Culture has existed as a means for self-identification. We coin the word culture when we want to express what makes us, us. But what gives a person their identity, or a country its uniqueness amongst a sea of others? Within the last few decades', culture has taken a more central stage in engaging people of different backgrounds to meaningful and educational conversations. Sudan is no exception to this new paradigm.

“Thousands of years before the birth of Christ, The Sudan appeared on the stage of world history - the history of ancient civilizations. States have risen and fallen, leaving behind treasures and remains spread along the Nile River”

- Mandour El Mahdi

Sudan is located by the Red Sea, spanning towards central Africa to the South, and the Middle East to the North. The country's geographical location and history intertwines both Arabian and African cultures, unseen anywhere else in the world. As the Sudanese diaspora have begun to educate themselves on their rich and diverse culture, a fascination for Sudan's geographical makeup, history and ageless traditions has sparked an urge to use this to map Sudan's extensive tourism potential.

## Dedication

To Sudan, and the Sudanese diaspora, may we one day be able to shed a bright light on the beauty of our homeland and everything it has to offer.

## Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my committee for their support and guidance throughout this thesis process as well as my friends and thesis cohort for listening to my ideas and providing me with their suggestions and thoughts.

A very special thanks goes to Professor Margaret McFarland who took the time to visit my site and see the city and the country from a different lens. Your excitement for the potential of Sudan's future placed in me an eagerness not to just be a part of it, but to be at its forefront.

To Jana, your encouragement, support and willingness to listen to my ideas and help dissect them for the last year has been incredible and for that I thank you.

And to my family, whom without them none of this would have been possible. Thank you for keeping me connected to my roots and constantly eager to learn more about my heritage and culture.

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# Chapter 1: Theory of Culture Identity and Cultural Tourism

## 1.1 Understanding Culture and its impact on society

Culture can offer an insight into the dynamic layers of history and tradition that bring people together through different periods of time. For the individual, it can be a means of identity, but also a sense of belonging. A society's culture is neither seen as static or unchanging, but rather a constant state of flux<sup>1</sup>. World-views, the integration of different ethnicities, the change in global climate and the growth of information resulting from the development of technology consistently influence a society's culture. Understanding one's genetic makeup or cultural attributes has become a fascination by many and resulted in researching into history and educating each other about different cultures, customs and traditions.

In the era of globalization, traditional society's look at ways to preserve their culture whilst in still benefiting from the integration into a globalized world. Culture can be a catalyst for social development, economic growth and political influences, but for many countries that promote their culture on a global platform, it can also bring with it a loss of uniqueness of local culture which can lead to loss of identity, social exclusion and sometimes conflict. Thus, it is important to place culture at the heart of any development policies, relating it back to the people and using the local resources, knowledge, skills and materials of the society to foster both creative and sustainable progress that can help positively shape a country's image on a global stage.

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<sup>1</sup> Richards, Greg, and Wil Munsters. 2010. *Cultural Tourism Research Methods*. Wallingford, Oxfordshire, UK.



### *1.1.1 Cultural Heritage and the shaping of Cultural Identity*

Cultural Identity can be expressed as one's expression of place in the world. In many societies, the pride associated with one's cultural identity allows for the fierce need to protect the uniqueness of their cultural, their heritage and language. Evidently, it is the need to protect one's identity, and a country's authenticity from foreign influences, particularly with the effect of globalization in today's world. Whilst cultures are susceptible to change, particularly as generations emerge in a changing world, cultural heritage provides a platform where generations are able to look back upon, re-evaluating past traditions in both the physical and psychological sense, as forms of both tangible (physical places that advocate a country's history and culture) and intangible (things that cannot be seen, but felt and heard - such as traditional music, poetry, languages) heritage<sup>2</sup>. Cultural heritage connects people, both local and foreign, with social values, beliefs, religion and social customs that manifest through complex periods, and survive generations of change. Thus, cultural heritage and cultural identity are a powerful emotive for both the individual and for society.

## 1.2 Cultural Tourism

### *1.2.1 Defining Cultural Tourism*

Cultural tourism is specifically concerned with a traveler's engagement with a country or region's culture, most specifically the lifestyle of the people in those geographical areas, their history, art, architecture, religion(s), and other elements that have contributed to their way of life and evidently their cultural identity. Unlike general

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<sup>2</sup> Richards, Greg. 2007. *Cultural Tourism : Global and Local Perspectives*. New York: Haworth Hospitality Press.

tourism, where the idea of place and space are differentiated, for example, a tourist's attraction is specifically themed and designed outside of the cultural confines of a city, cultural tourism looks at immersing the visitor into the cultural landscape of both the space and location. In addition, it seeks to deliver an authentic experience that doesn't detract away from a local's sense of space and place, fostering an element of education, engagement and overall excitement for both the tourist and the native.

### *2.1.1 Cultural Regeneration*

Cities can tend to represent a realistic expression of a society's identity. A city's urban fabric, together with its streets' design, building blocks, local construction materials and central figures of importance, all contribute to giving a city an identifiable anchor point within the world. Historic elements of a city can be manifested to become its icon and pertain to attracting tourists from across the globe. Planners and developers have helped shape the idea behind cultural regeneration, which has resulted in 'international tourism arenas for mass consumption'<sup>3</sup>. It has also lead to the idea of placelessness and a sense of identifying what place and space mean to both the local and the tourist, and how cities should be designed to preserve the authenticity of its culture – and not just be a 'place that could be anywhere'.

Cultural tourism is heavily influenced by authenticity. Cultural tourists seek to engage with a place they are unfamiliar with, that is culturally different to what they may know or are used to. This authenticity tends to be characterized by understanding one's sense of space and place, and how they are both different and similar to

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<sup>3</sup> Richards, Greg, and Wil Munsters. 2010. *Cultural Tourism Research Methods*. Wallingford, Oxfordshire, UK.

someone native to the country, but also how this sense of place differs for the tourist and the local – and the effect it can place on both<sup>4</sup>.

*How does cultural tourism affect the sense of space and place?*

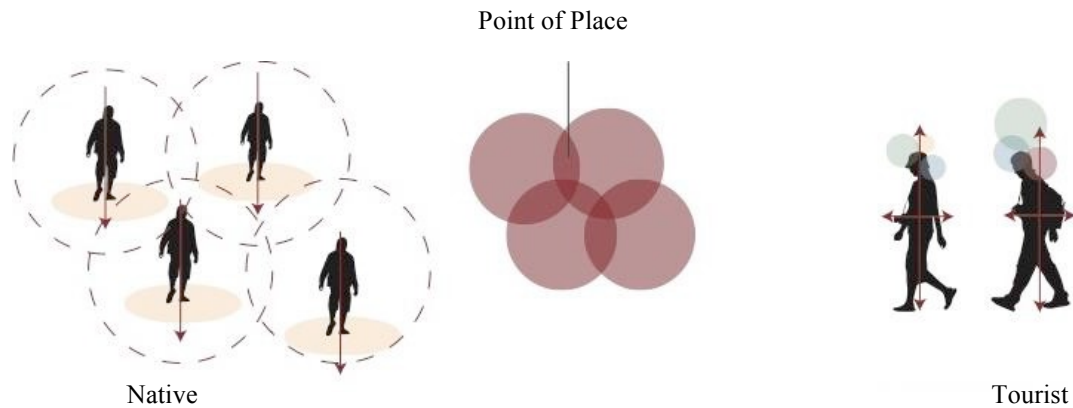
*- A phenomenology of place and space*

Edward Relph describes space as neither a void nor an isometric plane or some form of enclosed barriers that identify a place. Instead, he contends that to study the relationship of space to a more experientially based understanding of place; space must be explored in terms of how people experience it, both tangible and intangible. Tangible space can be described as pragmatic space, perceptual space, and existential space, whilst intangible space can be portrayed as planning space, cognitive space, and abstract space.

Both tangible and intangible spatial experiences, whilst adhering to a particular role in everyday life, are not mutually exclusive, and in fact are all dependants on one another in creating the ‘human spatial experience’, which is lived by all. Relph elaborates on the idea that ‘cognitive conceptions of space understood through maps may help to form our perceptual knowledge, which in turn may color our day-to-day spatial encounters as we move through real-world places’. Space is therefore heterogeneous and infused with many different lived dimensions, different to each individual but these ‘spaces’ together form a commonality through the engagement of space and ultimately the formation of place.

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<sup>4</sup> Richards, Greg. 2007. *Cultural Tourism : Global and Local Perspectives*. New York: Haworth Hospitality Press.



**Figure 1** Based upon Edward Relphs phenomenological analysis of understanding the relationship between space and place. Natives are anchored to a space and place, whilst tourist come in with a preconceived notion of a place, but unlike the native, they have the option to come and go when they like.

The concept of place can be derived from the idea of ‘lived space’.<sup>5</sup> As illustrated in figure 1, each individual occupies an ‘egocentric space’ of which they will have a certain perceptual awareness. Relph further elaborates on the idea of perceptual awareness by stating that ‘through particular encounters and experiences perceptual space is richly differentiated into place, or centres of special personal significance’. Our lived geographies consist of an intricately woven network of personal and social/collective perceptual spaces and places. Often, in many societies, place tends to be defined when these personal spaces overlap – usually due to cultural attributes and a common identity. The area of overlap tends to be where the public spaces are defined; they are areas of places where culture is further elaborated, and community is formed. It is also the places in which tourists can experience in conjunction with the natives of that place. In some places, this can be a public plaza, community buildings, a religious monument, or most notably a shared street.

<sup>5</sup> Richards, Greg. 2007. *Cultural Tourism : Global and Local Perspectives*. New York: Haworth Hospitality Press.



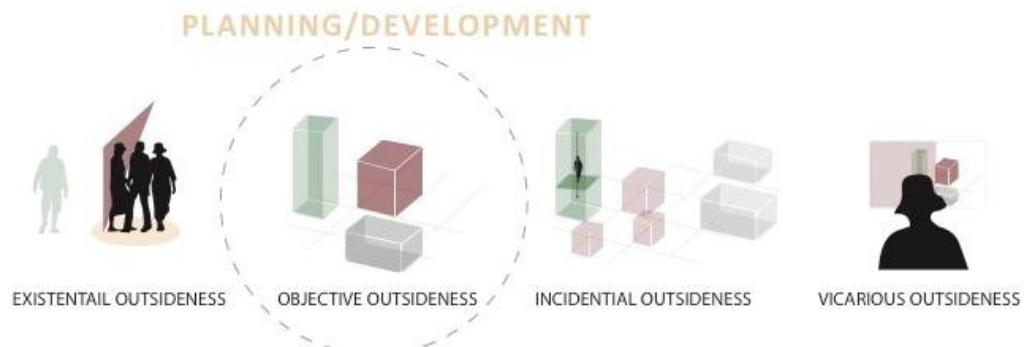
**Figure 2** Las Ramblas, Barcelona – An example of a public street inserted between private spaces/buildings (generally homes) that create a cultural space, which engages both natives and tourists

Thus, the essence of place according to Relph 'lies in the largely unselfconscious intentionality, that defines places as profound centres of human experience'. In the context of Cultural tourism, the idea of place highlights the concept of a place's authenticity. Tourism development tends to overshadow the authenticity of a place, but furthermore, it tends to affect people's engagement with place.

With regards to the understanding of place, Relph alludes to the concepts of outsidership and insidership, and how they affect people's understanding and experience of place. Figure 3 and 4 illustrate the understanding of the different types of 'outsidership vs. insidership'<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Richards, Greg. 2007. *Cultural Tourism: Global and Local Perspectives*. New York: Haworth Hospitality Press.



**Figure 3** Diagrammatic illustration of understanding the concept of 'outsideness' when talking about place, diagram by author



**Figure 4** Diagrammatic illustration of understanding the concept of 'insideness' when talking about place, diagram by author

Planners and developers tend to adopt the notion of 'objective outsideness' regarding tourism development, not necessarily planning for a place, but more for the societal and economic benefits of a place, even if it compromises a place's authenticity in terms of culture and identity. And whilst many tourists engage in the option of 'vicarious outsideness' (the use of social media, technology, etc to simulate travel experiences), it is understanding that many cultural tourists seek to adopt a

sense of engagement and awareness of the distinctiveness of the environment there in, adopting the idea of both 'behavioural and empathetic insideness'<sup>7</sup>. With Cultural tourism, the idea is to expel the notion of existential outsidership (where one feels alienated from a place – whether it is a tourist or native) and encourage the engagement of all people involved, whilst still accomplishing the benefits of tourism – economic vitality and global significance.

## 2.2 Cultural Tourism as a means of Unearthing Sudan's Hidden Gems

### 2.2.1 *Alternating the narrative - redefining what Sudan can offer on the global stage*

As cultural tourism becomes a more dominant form of tourism for many globally, the authenticity of Sudan's cities, in terms of history, culture and untouched geographical landscapes, have rendered the country as a means for cultural tourism to flourish, and contribute, very importantly, to the growth of its economy, and status on the world stage.

As Sudan grows into a popular destination for many, it is important that the concepts of defining and planning for a place are considered and regarded as an important tool for authentic cultural regeneration and particularly for urban growth – where cities such as Khartoum plan for more people to visit or even live in. Whilst tourism is a large income generating industry that can benefit a country and its people greatly, it should do so without compromising the sense of space and place created by the individuals who live there, and if planned well, should adopt the idea of both 'behavioral and empathetic insideness' as described by Relph.

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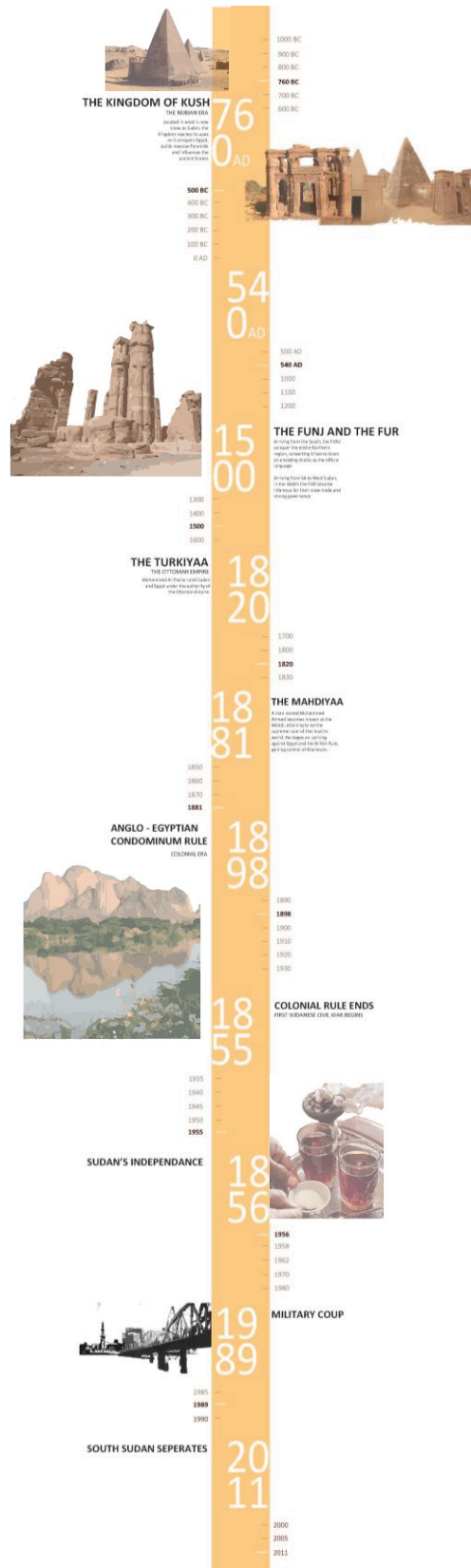
<sup>7</sup> Richards, Greg. 2007. *Cultural Tourism : Global and Local Perspectives*. New York: Haworth Hospitality Press.

By engaging with the outside world, who know little about the country other than what is portrayed on the news, and inviting foreigners to explore the country, understand its history, engage with its local dialect and different tribal traditions, are means that can benefit both the locals and the tourists. They can begin to shift the preconceived perceptions people may have about the country before visiting, and at the same time can yield as an opportunity for self-growth of the country and those who reside there. It can aid in the exchange of ideas and information, it can create jobs, harvest and take care of places of significant cultural importance that have in the past been neglected and unattained to. It provides an opportunity for the country and its people to revel in the uniqueness of their cultural identity and share that with others as well.



## Chapter 2: An Introduction to the Sudan

### Timeline



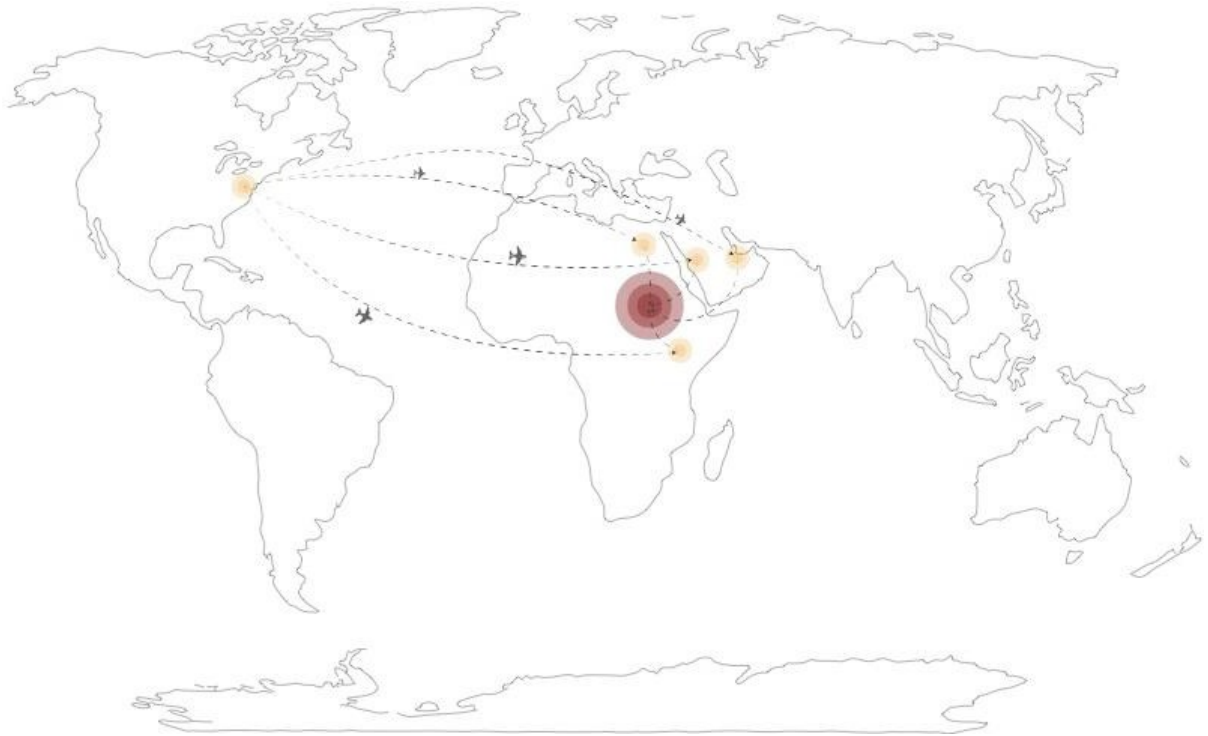
The current political and economic situation in Sudan has overshadowed its integral role in Ancient Civilization and its contribution on the world stage. However, as more people come to learn about the country, including the Sudanese themselves, a fascination for its history, natural landscapes, and multi-cultural elements has come to fascinate people from all over the world. It has been labeled as a ‘modern-day Indiana Jones’ for many of those who have enjoyed exploring its hidden relics.

Cultural attribute and national identity are direct influences of its geographical location, numerous years of colonization by Arabian and English settlers, and different tribal traditions passed down from generation to generation. Sudan’s exclusivity in the world is built upon the backbone of its history. The country’s cultural customs are defined through its hospitality, its importance’s of religious duty and its colorful array of art, music, food and architecture, some of which have been inherently affected by its political climate, both throughout history and today.

This chapter will explore the history of Sudan, from the birth of the Nubian Pharaohs, to the decolonization of the Anglo-Egyptian condominium. It will pay tribute to the importance of its geographical makeup and how this has consequently contributed to Sudan’s rich agricultural industry and development of infrastructure, both nationally and internationally. Periodically, the chapter will examine how these factors have together contributed to the cultural mosaic that today exists all around the country, and how this has affected the traditional customs of the Sudanese people.

## 2.1 Location

The dominance of the Nile flowing through the heart of Sudan is more than just a geographical feature. It is a metaphor that emphasizes the importance of its location and the complexity of its land. It is the thread that connects not only Arabia but the rest of the world with the heart of Africa. ‘This is Africa’ is a phrase commonly used to describe Sudan – a tropical sub-continental climate; the geography alone of this continent is evident in the whole of Sudan. From the dry Saharan desert in the North to the rainforests and mountains in the South, Africa presides here, but Arabia’s dominance does not go unnoticed.



**Figure 5** Sudan's Location - and accessibility from the United States, diagram by author

## 2.2 Historical Setting

Unlike today, there were no political boundaries that distinguished Sudan from many of its neighbouring countries. During both the Greek and the Roman occupation of Egypt, all lands south of Egypt were referred to as Taneshu, land of the Nahassi, but regarded as what is today known as Ethiopia. The arrival of the Arabian conquerors of Egypt, renamed the land south of Egypt, calling Sudan Bilad al-Sudan, which translates to ‘land of the Black’

Sudan's history is complex beyond just physical borders. A history of competition for natural and human resources as well as contributing influences from ‘tribal, religious, political fractions and colonial powers’ have created a multifaceted cultural mosaic.

*“(Sudan’s) history bears but a passing relation to physical borders and the modern nation state. The interplay of supposed contrasts – Egyptian and Nubian, African and Arab, Islamic and Christian – has created a rich but complex past that has encompassed not only the heights of Pharaonic dynasties and indigenous civilisations in Kerma and Merowe, but also the tragic lows of desertification, famine, colonial oppression and militant Islam”*

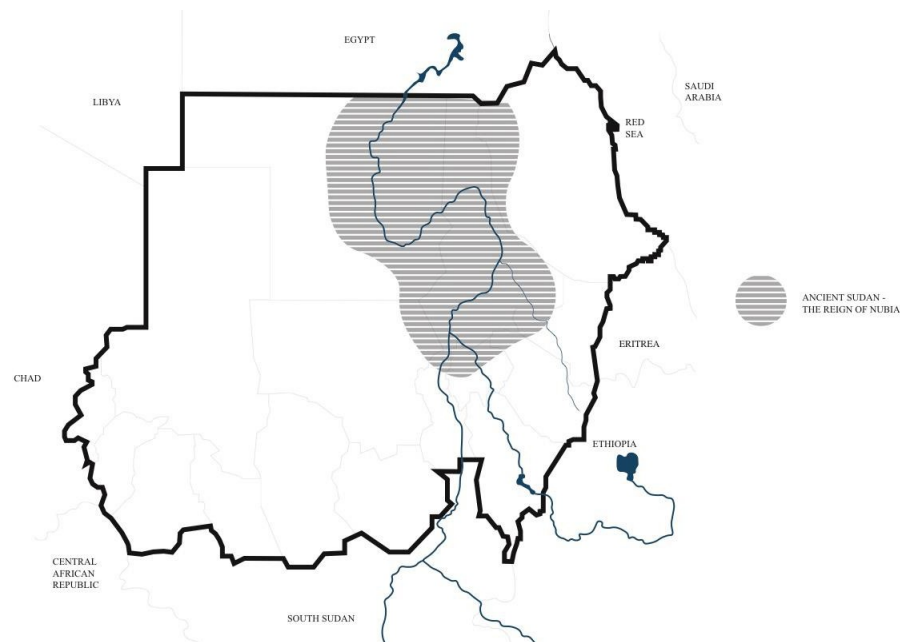
*Sophie Ibbotson, Max Lovell-Hoare*

### *2.2.1 The Ancient Sudan*

Spreads all over the Nile Valley region are historical remains that indicate there was an extremely close connection between Egypt and Sudan and that the Sahara was not always a desert landscape and climate. Around 4,000 years ago ‘much of North Africa went through a sub-pluvial era’. Plentiful rainfall gave rise to lush grassland, forests and numerous river streams supported by a diversity of wildlife. Colonies grew around the Nile and families were rich off its resources, from hunting to fishing to herding cattle’s.

The Nubian Desert offers insight into the early lives of the indigenous people of Sudan. Carved in the rocky outcrops deep in the desert are petroglyphs, almost 6,000 years old engravings, that illustrate the life of the community and the wildlife surrounding it. Excavations by archaeologist have recently revealed the sophistication of numerous uncovered stone structures that illustrate planned villages; deep wells and sites preserved for cattle sacrifices. The Nubian Kingdom was a major centre of power in the ancient world, and notably many of its queens, known, as Kandakes were some of its most powerful leaders, ruling in the style of pharaohs and commanding one of the most powerful armies in the world.

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, Nubians occupied the area surrounding the second cataract – a shallow stretch of the river between Aswan, Egypt and Khartoum, Sudan (Figure 6).



**Figure 6** Map of Nubia - The occupation of the first and second cataract allowed the Nubian Empire to expand far beyond the borders of Northern Sudan, diagram by author

They developed agricultural landscapes, mined gold and grew Arabic gum in addition to numerous other successes. Its gold and ivory were prized throughout the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Trade agreements were established between Sudan and Egypt as well as the south, and consequently the trade routes connected Africa to the rest of the world and its mercenaries served as far as Greece.

The pharaohs established Kerma as a capital ground, where today many of the fortress, temples and burial grounds can be still be seen. Egyptian civilization heavily influenced these regions through its culture, customs and religious beliefs. The Kingdom saw the earliest emergence of a planned city (Figure 7)<sup>8</sup>, which based the footprint for urban settlement patterns around Sudan.



**Figure 7** A historic reconstruction of the central district of the Royal City of Kerma, showing the Western Deffufa, a central religious monument, still standing today surrounded by elite residential buildings area

The fall of the Egyptian empire saw the rise of the Kingdom of Napta, ruled by King Kashta. Known as ‘the Ethiopian period’ by Greek and Roman historians,

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<sup>8</sup> Sundiata. "The Kingdom of Kush: A Proper Introduction [Illustrated]. May 13, 2018. Accessed May 18, 2018.

King Kashta son, Pianki conquered the whole Nile valley in Egypt and Sudan. He also became famous for his architectural activities –including the great temple of Jebel Barkal, and the construction of the pyramids.



**Figure 8** The pyramid and temples of Meroe - burial grounds for the Kings and Queens of Nubia

The decline of the Napta Kingdom came as the Assyrians fought to occupy Egypt, severing the cultural, political and religious ties between Egypt and Sudan. Napata city declined, but remained as the religious capital, whilst a new city Meroe, became the new centre of the Meroitic era. Located in a more fertile and life sustaining area, it was also rich in iron ore, soon becoming a regional centre for iron production. Archaeologists are still studying the city of Meroe, discovering temples, palaces and over 200 Pyramids, which were built during this era. The ruins around the city illustrate an architecture that suggests the kingdoms beauty and wealth.

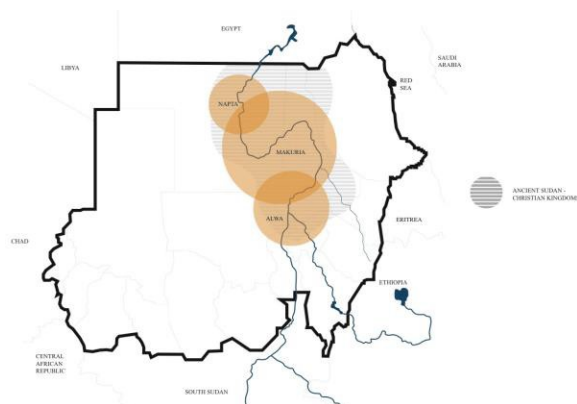




**Figure 9** Engravings on the wall telling stories of battles between the people of Meroe and the Romans, Persians and ptolemies, source: Sundiata. "The Kingdom of Kush

### 2.2.2 The Christian Sudan

The decline in agricultural production, frequent tribal attacks from the east, and deterioration of trade by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD saw the decline of Kingdom and initiated the division of Meroe into three Nubian Kingdoms<sup>9</sup>, which accepted Christianity in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century. Christianity spread into Sudan from Egypt, through Christians who were escaping the religious prosecution in Egypt and missionaries directed by Byzantine empress Theodora in 540 AD.



**Figure 10** As Christianity missionaries progressed his way down towards the South of the Nubian Kingdom, they also converted the Kingdom of Alwa and Makuria, diagram by author

<sup>9</sup> El Mahdi, Mandour. A Short History of the Sudan TT -. TA -. London : Oxford University Press, n.d, 24



Christianity unified all three kingdoms, restoring peace and order to the land, but also connected Nubia with the Mediterranean world once again. The connection offered a chance for the flow of ideas and trade, and the Byzantium heavily influenced the art and architecture of the Nubian churches.

What remains of Christianity today is little. The Kingdom of Makuria has little remains of antiques during that time; old churches built by the Coptic's remain in the Kingdom. Old Dongola currently houses the remains of one of the bigger churches, now a present-day mosque. Churches in Wadi Halfa are still present, as are the remains of monasteries in Wadi Ghazala (figure 11)<sup>10</sup>, not too far from Meroe. Much of history has deteriorated from this period, however this particular phase in time played heavily into defining Sudanese culture and customs, seen through its relics, architecture and historical context.



**Figure 11** The Ghazali Monastery, part of the Kingdom of Makuria. A second church and a complex of sanitary rooms, the latter a feature never before found in Nubia, suggesting a big monastic community or a role of a monastery as a pilgrimage center.

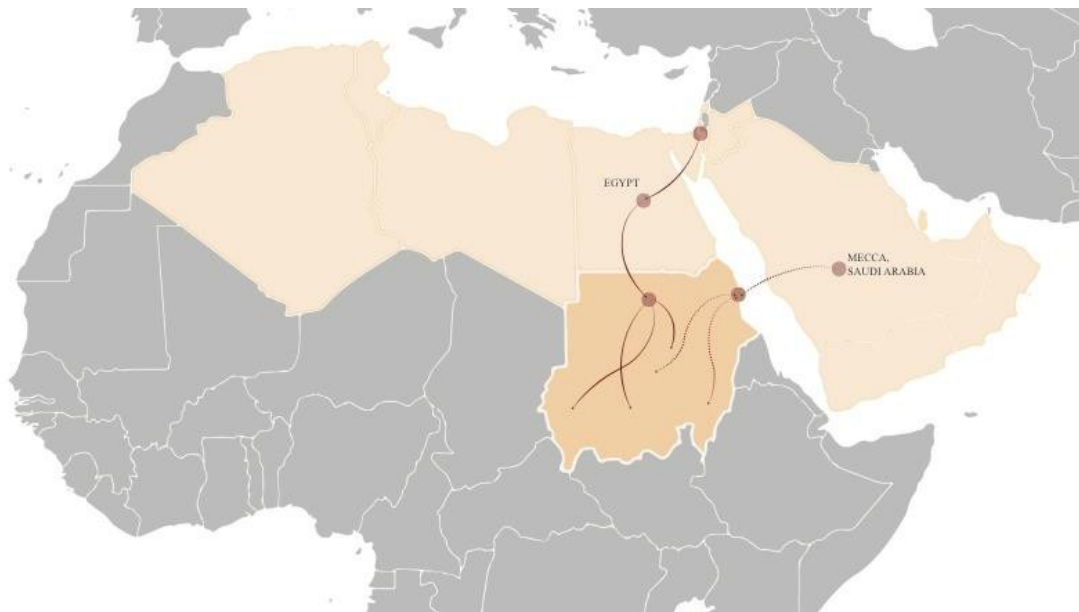
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<sup>10</sup> Nubian Monasteries. Accessed May 18, 2018. <http://nubianmonasteries.uw.edu.pl/>.

### *2.2.3 The Entry of Arabia and the rising of Islam*

The arrival of Islam supplied the country with more than just trade with the Arab world; it brought a new religion, a new language and an Islamic based culture. It redefined the meaning of being Sudanese, pervading the cultural, social and political outlook. It divided the North and the South, with the Arab entry dominating the North of Sudan.

The Arabs first tried to invade Nubia after conquering Egypt in 641 AD but were unsuccessful. A decade later, an army was sent against the Kingdom of Makuria. Reaching Old Dongola, churches were destroyed and a heavy resistance from both sides concluded with a peace treaty, where there would be an annual exchange of gifts and the Nubians would offer slaves in return for crops. Trade relations were established, and an order was set up that divided Egypt from Nubia/Sudan.



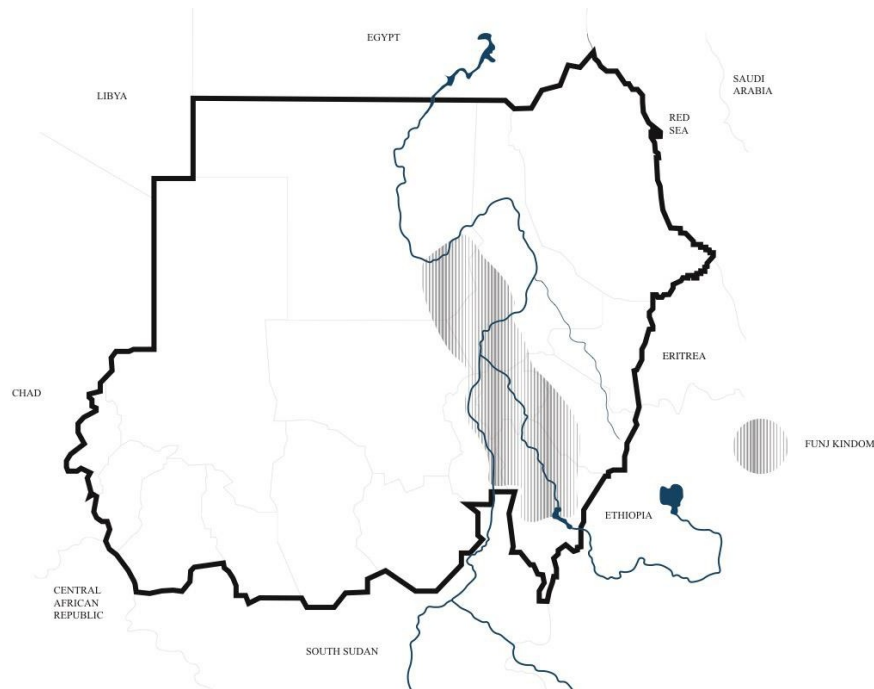
**Figure 12** The motion of Islam into Nubian Sudan, through Egypt, diagram by author

The treaty lasted 600 years, with Egyptian Muslim settlers inhabiting land in Wadi Halfa and developing gold and emerald mines in the east, and establishing a connection point in the port of Suakin, for pilgrims to travel to and from Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Islam was becoming increasingly prominent in Nubia. The rise of new Egyptian rulers – the Bahri Mameluks, in 1250, succeeded in extending their authority into Nubia, marking the end of the Nubian Christian Kings and placing an Arab leader of their nomination onto the throne of Old Dongola. Subsequently, the Arabs mixed with the population and intermarriage between the elites becoming the norm. The Arabs descended further into Sudan, some more nomadic than others and reaching far into the west and east, and down along the Nile River.

The tribe in Southern Sudan were not affected by the Arabs and neither was their religions, as they were unable to move south due to geographical barriers. Because of this, and many other political issues created later on during the condominium, the south was able to retain its culture, politics, religion and social heritage, one, which differed significantly from the North and consequently was a factor in its separation in 2011.

#### *2.2.4 The Funj and The Fur*

During the Arabs invasion of Sudan, political organisation proved to be difficult. They were unable to give the occupied territories a central government and instead divided the country up amongst themselves. The result – a traditional Arab sheikdom government based upon the tribe arose.



**Figure 13** Diagrammatic map location the area occupied by the Funj, diagram by author

The Funj, an ethnic group towards the south, established a kingdom with Arab settlers in 1504; known as the Black Sultanate (also known as the Funj Kingdom). The capital of the Kingdom, Sennar converted to Islam during this time, expanding their territories rapidly. The city became engulfed in the Arabian culture, and Islamic religion and the intermarriage between the Funj and the natives birthed a new Funj Generation. Slavery was at the midst of the Funj's wealth and power, and with an army of slave soldiers, they pushed the borders of Funj beyond the White Nile and into the Nubian Mountains, forcing inhabitants to accept Islam.

The Funj Dynasty was rattled with various amounts of internal conflict, and despite its growth, this marked the frequent removal of its kings. As a result, by the 19th century, the kingdom disintegrated in authority and power.

Whilst the Funj kingdom declined, the Fur, who came from South Africa and settled in the West of Sudan, in what is today known as the Darfur province, were predominately non-Arabized Muslims, where carving out a kingdom of their own. The Fur Sultane flourished for over two centuries, due to stability and clear governance, regaining Kordofan from the Funj, and spreading out to the South, invading Bahr al Ghazal and reaching as far down as Omdurman. Today, the Furs are still the largest ethnic group in Darfur, and are active agricultural people, with a nomadic lifestyle. Their society is a traditional one, governed by village elders, and until 1916 the Fur where rule by an independent Sultanate. Their political allegiance orientated around the politics of Chad. Darfur and the Fur people were conquered by the British in 1916 and declared to be a part of Sudan since.

#### *2.2.5 The Ottoman and Egyptian Rule*

The Ottoman Empire set its site on Sudan when it placed Mohammed Ali on the Egyptian throne. In order to establish a successful and powerful government, Ali looked for ways to advance the economic, industrial and cultural conditions of Egypt, and a powerful army to defend it. Ali's son, Ismail led an army of 4,000 soldiers up the Nile, which included Arabs, Albanians, Greek and Europeans (known as the Turks to the Sudanese). The army managed to conquer many parts of North Sudan; with tribal chiefs surrendering to the Turks invasion and the Nile Valley Senner falling into the hands of Ismail. North Sudan gained a new government known as the Turkiyyah in 1821.

The occupation of Sudan was disastrous at first. The ancient Meroitic

pyramids had been destroyed in search of gold and slave trading had increased substantially causing many inhabitants to leave their fertile land and become displaced. Mohammed Ali's main goal was to procure slaves, and in the first year of the occupation, 30,000 slaves were sent to Egypt to be inducted into the army.

In governing Sudan, the Egyptians divided the country up into several provinces, with smaller administrative units that corresponded to tribal territories. Khartoum was made the Capital City in 1835, becoming the seat of the Governor General (head of government). At the local level, Sheiks and tribal chiefs assumed administrative responsibilities. New buildings were designed and built, with new central government buildings, mosques and quabba's being formed (figure 14), in addition to new homes constructed from mud bricks. With the growth in population, Khartoum began to prosper, commercially, economically and culturally; new factories were established, among numerous workshops, local gardens, and development of agriculture and animal wealth.



**Figure 14** Sudanese quabba's, also known as the Sufi Tombs of Wad Medani, source: David Love

Mohammed Ali's grandson, Khediv Ismail wanted to expand development in Sudan. Growth in infrastructure between Egypt and Sudan blossomed, and trade became more frequent and successfully. Khediv sought to find means to abolish the slave trade recognising the damage it was doing to the reputation of Egypt and the cruelty in the treatment of back slaves. Ismail set about to suppress it, seeking help from European adventures to join his cause, who by 1830 has seen the rise and strength of the anti-slavery movement.

Charles George Gordon was appointed as General Governor in Sudan in 1877, where he issued strict orders against it and travelled all over the country attacking slave dealers. He remained to work on abolishing slavery but resigned from his position when Ismail fell from power. Mohammed Rauf Pasha succeeded Gordon, but his time in office was short and as the corruption and bribery of the Egyptian administration returned, so did the slave trade.

#### *2.2.6 The Mahdiya*

The rise of the Mahdiya came when the country had reached a breaking point. Known as Mohammed Ahmed, he hailed from Dongola, North Sudan and was a devout Muslim and preacher, proclaiming to be the prophesied redeemer of Islam. He vowed to overthrow the Turk, establish a theocracy in Sudan and liberate the holy cities of Arabia.

As his support base grew and his words spread across Sudan and Egypt, Khartoum sent troops to arrest him, but where unsuccessful. He escaped and fled to Kordofan, West Sudan. His time there was important to his uprising and a

pinnacle in the cultural impact it had on the Sudanese people. The Mahdist revolution declared war against the Turko-Egyptian rule in 1881. By the end of 1882, Ahmed had built an army, known as the Ansars, and the whole of Kordofan had 'fallen to the rebellion', including the second largest town in Sudan, Elobied.

Gradually the West of Sudan fell to the Mahdi's rule, and some tribes to the East of Sudan followed pursuit<sup>11</sup> expect for Khartoum and Suakin. To settle the overtaking of the Mahdiya, the British Prime Minister reinstated Charles Gordon as Governor General of Sudan, and he arrived in 1844. Whilst he was welcomed with jubilation this was short lived and Mahdi's reign drew closer to the gates of Khartoum, basing their camp in Omdurman. Cutting off supplies to the city, Khartoum fell into turmoil and Gordon was eventually killed<sup>12</sup>. Khartoum was seized, with Kassala and Sinnar falling to their rule soon after, and by late 1885 the Ansar had moved into the Southern region.

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<sup>11</sup> El Mahdi, Mandour. A Short History of the Sudan TT -. TA -. London : Oxford University Press, n.d, 99

<sup>12</sup> Ibbotson, Sophie, and Max Lovell-Hoare. Sudan. Globe Pequot Press, 2012







**Figure 16** Mahdi's Tomb in Omdurman, Source: Winston Churchill "The River War" 1899

#### *2.2.7 The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Rule*

As the internal situation was deteriorating in Sudan at the end of the Khalifa's regime, Britain ordered its re-conquest in 1895. In 1886 Kitchener, the appointed General entered Dongola, taking control and making plans for a railway across the desert from Wadi Halfa to Khartoum, eventually making his way to the Khalifa. In 1898 he succeeds in battling the Ansar and seizing power of Khartoum. Kitchener headed south, overpowering and expelling the French and Belgium from the territories' they occupied regaining control over Sudan and establishing an Anglo-Egyptian Condominium rule.

The British developed the country around British colonial rule, and established a modern government, laying the foundations for the administrative, economic and social services of the country in Khartoum. Under the Governor

General Reginald Wingate, agriculture and building programmes were initiated, developing the infrastructure, building a University, schools, hospitals and government buildings, in the colonial architectural style, still prevalent today across the city. The port city of Suakin was replaced with the docks of Port Sudan, for the trade of cotton and crops with the outside world.

#### *2.2.8 The Independence of Sudan*

Following from the independence of Egypt in 1922 from British rule, Sudan was inspired to take its own initiative and gain independence. Political parties formed, most notably the Democratic Union Party and the Ummah Party, both with different objectives, and together made up the Graduate National Congress, which lobbied the government for political power. Sudan achieved independence without the rival political parties having agreed on the form and content of a permanent constitution. Instead, the Constituent Assembly adopted a document known as the Transitional Constitution, which replaced the governor general as head of state with a five-member Supreme Commission that was elected by a parliament.

The British and Egyptian Governments recognized the independence of Sudan on the 1 January 1956, with the Republic of Sudan being born and Al-Azhari its first president. The independence occurred without conflict, but the problems from the condominium rule inherited by Sudan and the less than concrete planning for governance after the independence, has until this day, been a factor in many political conflicts, particularly with opposing parties. The development of Khartoum, and the

exclusion of the south from political inclusion further aided to the conflict and division between the North and the South, and even more so tribal villages outside of the capital, still adherent today.



**Figure 17** Sudan's flag raised at the independence ceremony on the 1st January 1956 by the Prime Minister Isma'il Alazhari and opposition leader Mohammed Ahmed Almahjoub. Source: Sudan's Film Unit

### 2.3 Culture and Customs as a direct influence of Sudanese History

Culture tends to be an essential part of many people's lives. It reflects its 'prestigious association with civilization and social status and connects people through different mediums whilst encompassing their distinctive traditions and its role in a modern society. In this chapter we also begin to define customs, represented as a 'dynamic phenomenon', as common practices relative to a large group of people that can begin to define their culture.

The key to understanding Sudan's culture and customs is the term diversity. Comprised of over 500 tribal groups, each major ethnic group and historical region has its own special form of cultural expression. Migration of a large caliber, resulting

from years of colonization through different empires, has contributed to the tribal diversity of the country and been a catalyst for cultural growth. It can be seen through the different dialects, traditional garments, the food, music and art, but all are united under one umbrella, the Sudanese Culture. The country's customs and traditional practices have been directly influenced by the fusion of foreign cultures throughout its history and the notion of modernity and globalization. Locally, the Sudanese identity is defined by commonalities between tribal cultures and traditions, but also social, economic and political issues.

### *2.3.1 Religion and Tribalism*

Religion in Sudan has been a focal factor in Sudan's culture and customs. Since ancient times it has shaped both the social, economic and political system. For the Sudanese, it is a powerful part of the individual's identity, their tribe and traditionally for many this has been seen through the affiliation with a particular political party or ideology. Many social customs evolve from Islamic teaching, and public spaces are emphasized by the 'gradual merging of indigenous and Islamic characteristics, which has produced the form of the contemporary African-Islamic city'. For example, the location of the palace in the centre of the city – the Khalifa house is situated in Omdurman, which during the Mahdiya was the Capital, and today the President's palace is situated in the heart of the capital in coherence with the Islamic Rule. This is also true to the location of the palace in the pre-colonial African cities.

Sudan's is predominantly a Muslim country, but Christianity and traditional religions are all recognized in the Sudanese constitution. Religious dynamics in Sudan also play an important role in 'complex ethnic structures, interactions between its citizens and socio-economic activities'. For instance, Friday in Islam is regarded as a holy day, and as such in Sudan, it is their day off and used for worship in the mosque, and gathering with friends and family. In addition to this is a branch of Islam known as Sufism. One of the largest Sufi communities in the world, it is often seen as mystical due to its followers' pursuit of a personal, inner path to God. On Friday evenings, Sufist groups pay tribute to their beliefs in an 'absolute absorption in worship during which prayers, the back and forth motions and spins may be repeated with enough fervour to induce a trance', forming a circular space that links the participants together.



**Figure 18** Sufism rituals in Sudan, source: Dănuț, Încroșnatu – The psychedelic world of Sudan's Sufism

The use of drums, swords motioning in a circular direction, garlands of 'wooden misbaha beads' and a green colored garment occupy certain areas, and the chants can be heard from miles away. Additionally, other tribal traditions, rooted in ancestral worship and spirit, influence many rituals codes and ceremonies just like



Sufism, and in many ways the architecture of the tribal territories – some of which can be seen in the construction and orientation of the Pyramids of Meroe.

### 2.3.2 Art and Architecture

In Sudan art is another means of self-expression, embodying a range of different mediums. In many tribes, body art is one of the ways that Sudanese artist would express their creativity and is reminiscent of many other African tribes around the continent. Body tattoos, scarring and body paint, did not only indicate beauty but where also used to differentiate between tribes and personal status.

*“Whatever the source of the designs used on the body, the critical factor is that the body must be emphasized, complemented, enhanced. No design or artistic treatment must detract from the presentation of the physical form itself — the chief reason, after all, for the personal art rests in the proper cultural exposure and celebration of the healthy body.” — James C. Faris*



**Figure 19** The body art of the Nubia people as photographed and analyzed by James C. Faris

Whilst today body scarring is less common, henna is still apart of traditional Sudanese beautification rituals. In addition, Arabic calligraphy, artwork and statues emphasized different deities in Sudan<sup>13</sup>.

Art is also seen through the traditional garments. Sudan is one of the largest cotton industries in the world and as such, textiles are an important feature of the Sudanese community. The color and shape of the thawb worn by women, and the Jalabiya, worn by men distinguish tribal identity, status and occasion.



**Figure 20** Traditional Sudanese dress - the Thoub and Jalabiya

Architecture in Sudan is quite possibly one of the strongest indicators of diversity. Unlike many countries where the architecture can help define a countries culture, the architecture in Sudan is eclectic and very much a shadow of the different period of Sudan's history. This is no more evident than the design of houses in Sudan. In the North, and particularly in the rural areas, traditional architecture embodies the

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<sup>13</sup> Essien, Kwame., and Toyin. Falola. *Culture and Customs of Sudan TT - . Culture and Customs of Africa; Culture and Customs of Africa. TA - .* Westport, Conn. : Greenwood Press, n.d.



use of ‘mud houses which are built with solid walls and some type of Arab designs and finishes’. Courtyard homes are common in rural areas where community culture is important.

In the Urban sense this begins to differ. Architecture is a means of security and privacy more so than just aesthetics. Courtyards are designed to enclose the house, creating private spaces for maximum security. It is often tied to the concept of modernity, and many homes are built using timber, brick, metal and concrete. It is common to find in Khartoum skyscrapers and glass buildings, and less common the further out you are from the city. The city has become an assortment of both western and Arabian style design, and additional construction methods. This is discussed and analyzed further in Chapter 5.



**Figure 21** Multifaceted Architecture in Khartoum, source: Google images

### 2.3.3 Music and Literature

Music and literature are at the heart of Sudanese culture. It communicates between different tribes, is used as a means of expression in religious rituals and family festivals and ‘it adds a glorious additional sensory dimension of the country’<sup>14</sup>, whether through spoken words or traditional instrumental sounds.

Music in Sudan can be divided into two main categories, the traditional musical escapades related to the devotion of traditional tribal dance and the Sufism religious ritual, known as the *Zhikr*, or the African tradition of chanting and the playing of local instruments, such as ‘tanbura’. It is common to find live music that adheres to the Sudanese’s musical culture at weddings and family festivals. Music at these events is often a mix of the old and the new, the traditional indigenous African musical melodies accompanied by the more modernized, Arabian and western influenced songs and melodies.



**Figure 22** (Right) Abu Obaida Hassan, the Mysterious Pioneer of Sudanese’ Shaigiya ( a tribe in Sudan) Music playing the tanbura, (Left) Sudanese women performing aldayib music

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<sup>14</sup> Ibbotson, Sophie, and Max Lovell-Hoare. Sudan. Globe Pequot Press, 2012, 22

Music has been an important means in also reflecting the political turmoil in Sudan, particularly post-independence. It has acted as a unifying agent when at times the politics did not, particularly during the period when Sharia Law was imposed. Whilst it targeted the Music industry negatively and left many famous Sudanese singers to voluntarily leave the country, it helped exposed Sudanese Music globally, particularly in Africa. In the last decade, Music has again taken central stage in Sudan, and Musicians have been recognized for their contribution to the culture of Sudan. Festivals, such as the Karmakol festival have attracted people from across the world to come and visit Sudan and immerse in the Music and literature of the country and use it as a means to educate people about the history of Sudan, socially, economically and politically.

Literature has played a similar role in Sudan as Music has, translating the thoughts of writers into visual form, through poems, folk tales and myths. The establishment of the first newspaper in Khartoum in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century brought a new dimension to the literature world of Sudan. Writers and Novelist share their poetic words and short stories to people across the city and connecting with people across cultures. All across Sudan, spoken words and poetry are an important form of self-expression. Engaging the youth, by learning from the elders, spoken word forums are a significant part of many people's lives in Sudan. It gives Sudanese youth to platform to represent a new era of debate that pays homage to Sudan's history of spoken words and poetry and an assertion of its identity in today's world, amidst political turmoil.

#### *2.3.4 Sudanese Cuisine*

Particular attention in Sudanese culture is the food that is served both in the home and in public spaces, with an emphasis of community and sharing – it is not just based on nutritional values, but also an extension of their identity and again, influenced strongly by the cultural diversity of the land<sup>15</sup>. Agricultural plants in specific geographical regions of Sudan enhance the variety of food that can be found. The Nile is a dominant source in traditional food, giving way not only to fertile agricultural land that grows crops, but also to local fishing markets. Food is also dependent on economic, political and natural resources.

Preparation of dishes is also passed down from generation to generation, and some dishes can be date back hundreds of years, and with that food is consumed with traditional custom in mind – the most important of which is hospitality. It is common to find large groups of people gathered together and sharing a meal. During the month of Ramadan, trays of food are placed at different points along a busy street pavement to invite people to break their fast together – it is a common site and emphasis the importance of food as a means to bring all people together.



**Figure 23** Dining together - creating spaces that bring people together through Sudanese Cuisine

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<sup>15</sup> Essien, Kwame., and Toyin. Falola. *Culture and Customs of Sudan TT - . Culture and Customs of Africa; Culture and Customs of Africa. TA - .* Westport, Conn. : Greenwood Press, n.d.

## Chapter 3: Social, Political and Economic Climate

### 3.1 Sudan in 2018 – a look into its current state

*Sudan in 2018 – a year full of hope in the midst of wavering, historic chaos*

The social, economic and political history of Sudan is complex in its nature. As a country that has gone through an array of colonization's and houses over 500 different tribal groups, Khartoum has been viewed as a cultural mosaic, to where different attributes and cultural heritages have come together to be governed under one entity. Sudan has gone from a colonial country to gaining independence, embracing democracy and rattled by dictatorships.

Its richness stems from its land and its people, fruitful in resources and natural attribute, but the instances of poverty, and classification as a low-middle income county<sup>16</sup>, has been dominated for the last two decades from its political standpoint. But change is happening, and it's coming at a time that it is needed the most. At a time where the economy is at its worst, and the political imbalance is beginning to seek new ways of driving the country into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, both economically, socially and politically, the country's focus has welcomed the tourism industry to expose Sudan's contributions on the world stage – from its rich history, undiscovered archaeological sites, agricultural importance and intricate, unique culture.

Sudan is no exception to political controversy and this has continuously affected its foreign relationships. The country has been governed and colonized by foreign entities, which throughout the years have left a mark so deep it resides with

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<sup>16</sup> Ibbotson, Sophie, and Max Lovell-Hoare. *Sudan*. Globe Pequot Press, 2012.

the cultural dialogue of the country and is portrayed through its political and legal system, seen through its architectural styles, and noticed within its city fabric. On occasions, it can even be seen in the everyday attributes of its people, from the food they eat to the way they dress and the communities they form. The people have governed kingdoms, inspired revolutions and forced Sudan to be seen on the world stage, both past and present, positively and negatively.

Prior to Sudan's independence, the country saw the rise of Sudan Nationalism, which opposed indirect rule and advocated for a centralized government that united the North and South<sup>17</sup>. During the colonial rule, the primary focus directed efforts on modernizing Sudan and developing the economy by introducing European technology and instituting liberal English traditions<sup>18</sup>. The colonial regime focused only on the North of Sudan, giving little attention to the South (predominantly a Christian nation), which was isolated from the developing, politically, economically and socially, a decision that is adherent to the condition between the north and the south till this day.

Today, sixty-two years after Sudan gained independence, the country no longer unites both the South and North. South Sudan gained independence in 2011, and since then the country has entered an economic turmoil. What was once primarily dependent on oil, political action is now finding new means to stabilizing the economy, through agriculture, manufactured goods, exportation of gold, and most recently, the development of the tourism industry.

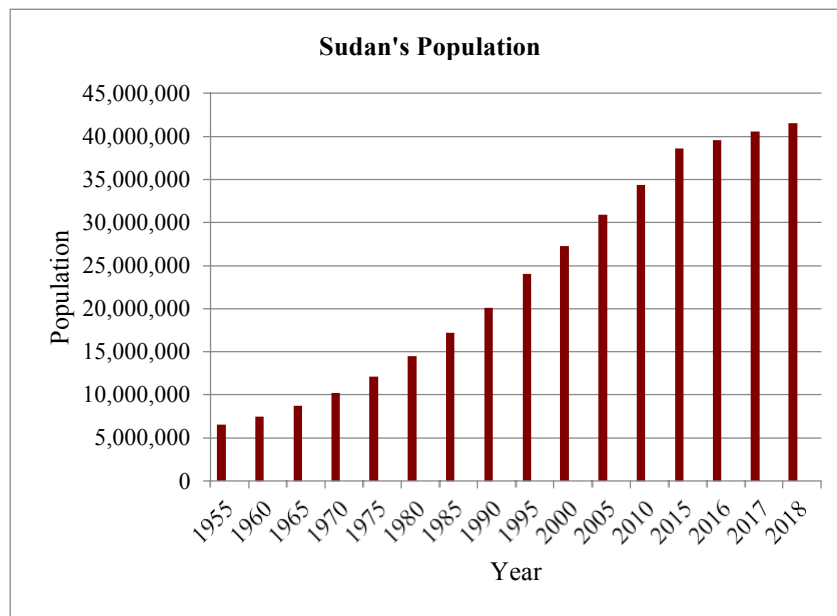
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<sup>17</sup> "Chapter 1." *Sudan, a Country Study*, by LaVerle Bennette Berry, 5th ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 2015, p. 27.

<sup>18</sup> "Chapter 1." *Sudan, a Country Study*, by LaVerle Bennette Berry, 5th ed., Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 2015, p. 26.

### 3.1.1 Population

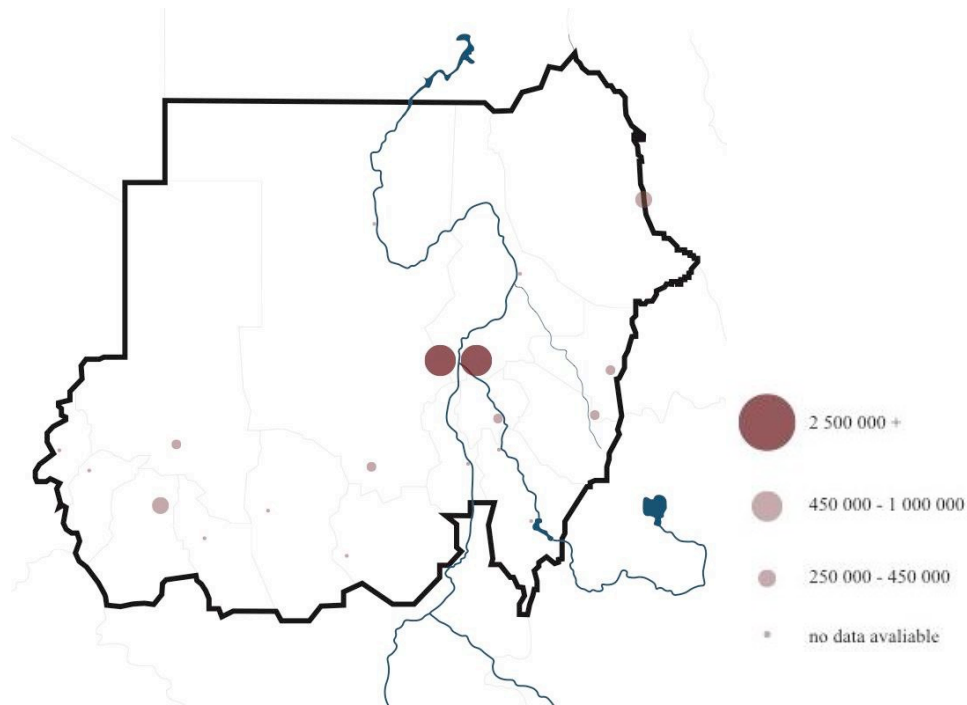
Sitting along the Red Sea, and where the Blue Nile meets the White Nile, Sudan's population has predominantly consisted of descendants from both the Arabian Peninsula and indigenous inhabitants of the Nile Valley. With over 500 tribes, of whom harbor over 100 different dialect, traditions and cultural heritage, the current statistics show Sudan's current population as of 2018 is 41, 224, 766, with a population growth rate of 2.4% per annum<sup>19</sup>.



**Figure 24** Sudan's Population growth, source: World population review, edited by author

<sup>19</sup> Sudan Population. (2018-02-13). Retrieved 2018-03-25, from <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/sudan-population/>





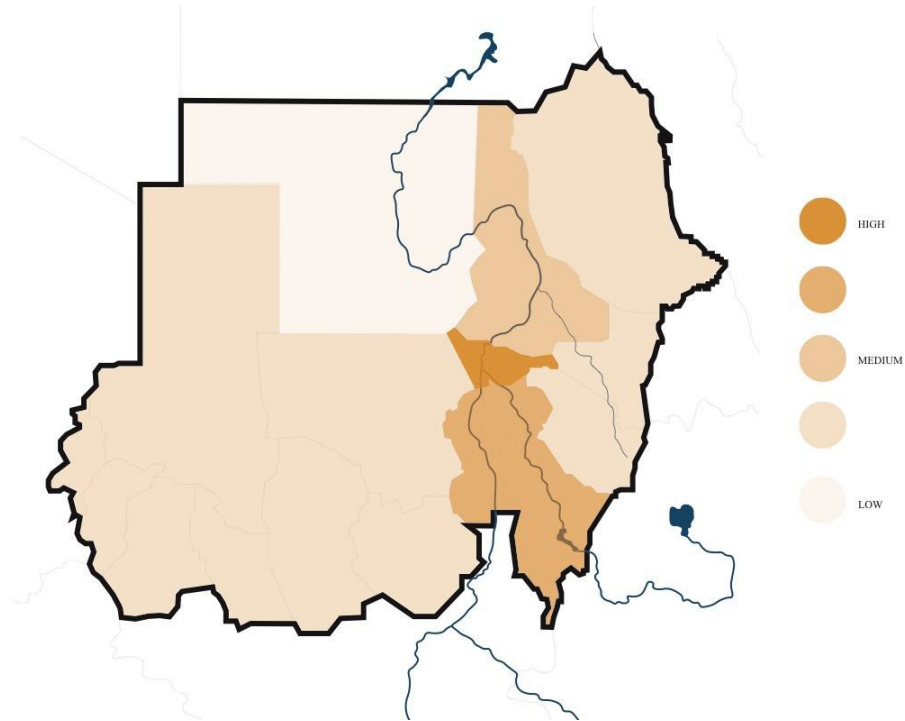
**Figure 25** Sudan's population in cities, source: Flanck.com, diagram by author

The population density in Sudan has grown exponentially since 1956, almost doubling in size. The growing increase in the number of refugees seeking solace in Sudan from neighboring countries have grown heavily in the last decade, and whilst there has been a steady decline in fertility rate in the country since 2005, Sudan still holds one of the highest fertility rates in comparison to other countries<sup>20</sup>. The demographic consists of a young population; almost 40% of the population is below the age of 15, whilst only 3.3% is over the age of 65<sup>21</sup>. It is estimated that currently, 34% of the population is currently living in urban cities.

<sup>20</sup> Sudan Population. (2018-02-13). Accessed March 25, 2018.  
<http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/sudan-population/>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid





**Figure 26** A diagram of Sudan's population density per city, source: Fanack.com, diagram by author

### *3.1.2 Migration to the capital*

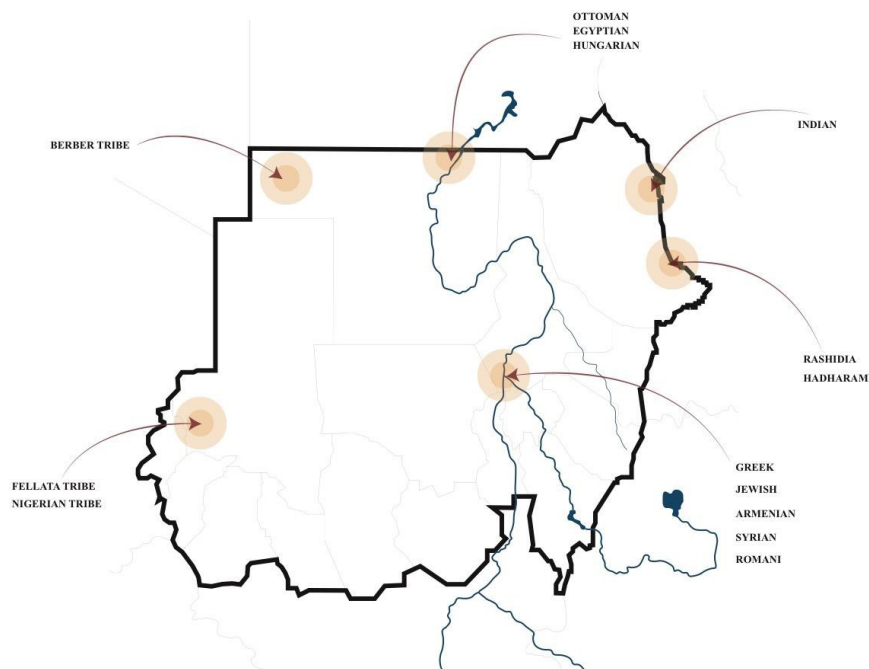
The current population density is recorded to be 24 per Km<sup>2</sup> with approximately 35.3% of the population living in urban cities (figure 25). Since independence, scores of migrants left their rural villages in search of employment in either large agricultural towns or urban centers - predominantly the capital city.

In the early 2000's, conflict in the then, South Sudan and Darfur, meant internal migration to the city was a source of not only 'economic, social, and psychological reasons, but now with the added factor of personal survival'<sup>22</sup>. With internal migration came issues such as housing, employment, and integration into different landscapes and cultures from people who came from close-knit tribes in the

<sup>22</sup> "Chapter 2." *Short History of Sudan*, by Fadlalla Ali Mohamed Hassan, IUniverse, Inc., 2007, p. 80.

rural regions. The need for identity became complex, and Khartoum became a clustered space where ethnic divisions were visible but weaved together through a commonality of shared space and social needs.

Asides from internal migration in Sudan, there has been a considerable number of Sudanese who have migrated to neighboring countries, as well as more distant ones. In 2008, it was reported that approximately 230,000 refugees have moved to Sudan, mostly from neighboring countries, and most recently it was reported that the country hosts over 2 million Syrian refugees<sup>23</sup>. Many refugees and immigrants have managed to integrate well into the Sudanese society, and many of who live in the Capital.



**Figure 27** Net Migrations into Sudan since the Nubian Kingdom, Diagram by Author

<sup>23</sup> Almajdoub, Sumaya. "Sudan Welcomes Its Newest Refugees." *Fair Observer*, 1 Nov. 2017, [www.fairobserver.com/region/africa/sudan-syrian-refugees-civil-war-middle-east-africa-news-11621/](http://www.fairobserver.com/region/africa/sudan-syrian-refugees-civil-war-middle-east-africa-news-11621/).

Sudan is no stranger to international migration. It is a country built on different ethnicities and backgrounds. Settlers from all over the world have found refuge here and it can be seen in the everyday cultural attributes, in the food, art, music, and architecture. It traces the lineage and ideals of tribes far back to ancient civilization, and it creates with it a fusion of multiculturalism both unique and intricate to its land and its people.

### *3.1.3 Ethnicity/Language/Religion*

Sudan's ethnic identity is one, which is burdened in complexity. It is predominantly a Muslim majority nation and whilst Sudanese Arabic and English serving as the nations official languages, there are over 100 different Afro-Asiatic dialects spoken by different tribes.

30% of the population consist of ethnic minority groups that include tribes such as the Copts - who identify as an ethno religious community found in North Africa, and who are of primarily Christian, Nubians –speaking both Arabic and a variety of Nilo-Saharan languages, and the Zaghawa, located primarily to the west of Sudan, and most commonly found in central African countries.

However, Sudan's population is largely made up of an Afro-Arab identity. Approximately 70% of Sudanese identify as Arab - whether through heritage, culture or dialect, consistent with the arrival of Arabian tribes at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. The Sudanese are not, however, necessarily homogeneous in terms of the Arabian identity, neither are they direct decedents of the Arabian Peninsula. They are

a nationality consistent of a mixture of tribes and foreign nationalities not anchored to the indigenous people of the Nile Valley.

*'The mixing of nationalities and tribes in Sudan has left the physical definition of Arab very loose: Arab is, therefore, cultural, as it is linear'*

*Sophie Ibbotson, Max Lovell-Hoare, Sudan Bradt Travel Guides*

Whilst we associate Arabian nationals to embody particular physical and geographic definitions, the term Arab can vary in definition. There have been numerous debates regarding the ethnicity of the Sudanese person – derived from genetic makeup, historical influences, and geographical location. But its essences lie within the understanding that Sudan is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious melting pot<sup>24</sup>. It sits geographically at the heart of where the Blue Nile meets the White Nile, and as if serendipitously, it is the gateway for where Arabia meets Africa. Sudan is a country unique in its geographical location, but furthermore, its ethnic and cultural diversity, which is emphasized in the countries social conducts and beliefs.

### *3.1.4 Education*

Education to the majority of Sudanese is of dire importance and this is further emphasized by the education system. Sudan's education system is rooted deep in its Islamic culture of the northern and influenced by previous British imperial policy<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibbotson, Sophie, and Max Lovell-Hoare. *Sudan*. Globe Pequot Press, 2012.

<sup>25</sup> Lasu, Levi Simba. "Sudan - Educational System-overview." Islamic, South, Policy, and Missionary - StateUniversity.com. Accessed March 25, 2018. <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1432/Sudan-EDUCATIONAL-SYSTEM-OVERVIEW.html>

Primary education is both free and mandatory for those aged 6 to 13, whilst higher education during the colonial period mirrored education in the United Kingdom, with degrees being awarded by the University of London.

As such, Sudan currently has over 30 universities, both public and private, as well as higher education colleges, enrolling around 447,000 students, from all around Sudan, as well as neighboring countries. The literacy rate is recorded 75.9% for those above the age of 15, and is particularly higher in urban areas, compared to the rural village<sup>26</sup>. The University of Khartoum is the first and most respected institution in Sudan. With campuses scattered around Khartoum, the University birthed the need for higher education, and today the capital holds a number of well know Universities at its heels.

### 3.2 Economic State of Sudan

#### *3.2.1 Overview*

Despite international sanction and civil wars, Sudan saw real promise to its economy in 2010, being labelled as the 17<sup>th</sup> fastest growing economy in the world<sup>27</sup>. Sudan had benefited greatly from oil profits, as well as gaining international development, and exportation of a number of agricultural goods – such as Arabic gum, peanuts, sesame seeds and cotton. In 2011 however, with the separation of the South, Sudan lost almost 80% of its oil fields, leading to a heavy decline in oil revenues. This resulted in a major readjustment to the country's

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<sup>26</sup> *Sudan Population*. (2018-02-13). March 25, 2018.  
<http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/sudan-population/>

<sup>27</sup> "About Sudan." UNDP in Sudan. Accessed March 25, 2018.  
<http://www.sd.undp.org/content/sudan/en/home/countryinfo.html>.

economic situation and prompting harsh financial measures to be taken.

It was predicted that once the sanction was lifted in October 2017, the economic and social development of the country would blossom, paving way for a new era in the Sudanese political, economic and social climate. Unfortunately, drastic inflation has hit Sudan hard, with high priced commodities becoming unaffordable for many. Whilst Sudan is no stranger to a double-digit inflation rate, the current state of the country puts pressure on a political reform that addresses the economic stability of the country, and requires a rigorous look at sectors of the economy that have a potential to pull Sudan out of its current economic and social crisis – one particular sector being tourism.

### *3.2.2 Gross Domestic Product Structure and the effects of Tourism*

With the oil sector driving the majority of Sudan's GDP growth since 1999, the economy flourished off of oil production, high oil prices, and significant inflows of foreign direct investment<sup>28</sup>. The loss of three-quarters of its oil production has greatly affected and weakened the basis of the economy, as did the loss of oil transit fees between Sudan and South Sudan further amplified the already fragile state of the economy. The GDP growth dropped from 11.5% to 2.8% in 2011, and currently estimated to stand at 3.4%. However, the country is rich in natural resource and agriculture remains till this day, the main source of income and employment in Sudan, making up a third of the economic sector.

Sudan's GDP is heavily reliant on three sectors, - agriculture, industry, and

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<sup>28</sup> DARBO, S., & ELTAHIR, Y. (2017). *Sudan 2017 - African Economic Outlook*. Retrieved from <http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/country-notes/sudan>

services. The agriculture sector has always been the largest, composed of crops, livestock, fishing and forestry, and usually indicative of employment in more rural areas of the country, and accounting for approximately 95% of the country's exports. The industry sector is rapidly developing and primarily concentrated in Khartoum, consisting of 'agricultural processing, electronics assembly, plastics manufacturing, sugar production, meat processing and various light industries'<sup>14</sup>.

Recently, Sudan has also focused its attention on becoming a hub for the medical industry in East Africa, providing medical services for many countries that depend on Sudan for medicine. Despite the concerns in economic strength, Sudan's implementation of 'macroeconomic reform policies' in the late 1990's has moved Sudan from a low-income economy to a lower medium income economy' as classified by the World Bank.

However, with the growing issues revolving around oil production and economic growth, and the rise of inflation, Sudan has begun to place a larger emphasis on the tourism sector, vowing to contribute a minimum of \$1 billion to the growth of tourism, annually, in hopes that it will be a contributing factor to boosting the current economy. In 2017, the tourism industry contributed to 5.3% of the country's GDP and this is forecasted to rise by 4.3% annually<sup>29</sup>, specifically due to the need for more commodities (accommodation and transportation), more industries that promote cultural service, (such as recreation centres, food and beverage and retail) and a wider source of spending from visitors, but most importantly it can also promote a rise in employment opportunities.

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<sup>29</sup> DARBO, S., & ELTAHIR, Y. (2017). *Sudan 2017 - African Economic Outlook*. Retrieved from <http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/country-notes/sudan>

### 3.2.3 *Employment rate*

Unemployment rate saw a decrease from 2007 to 2012, but there has been a gradual increase in the last few years with current unemployment standing at 19.2%. The unemployment rate has been fluctuating considerably over the past several years, due to economic instability that is coherently unable to accommodate the increase in the number of job seekers. Furthermore, there is a structural workforce problem, where the rate of increase of the workforce is now close to the population growth. The high rate of growth of unemployment (6.5%), resulting from high rates of growth of the population and workforce on the one side and the low rate of employment on the other side clearly demonstrates the inability of the economy to create job opportunities to match the growth in the workforce<sup>30</sup>. The tourism industry is thus not only expected to help with the national GDP but in addition, this is expected to generate an array of new jobs, growing the employment sector by 5.7%. By 2027, it is projected that the rise in visitor coming to Sudan, will contribute to almost 280,000 new jobs<sup>31</sup>.

## 3.3 Politics in Sudan

### 3.3.1 *Sudan's Governmental Makeup*

Officially, the politics of Sudan takes place in the framework of a federal presidential representative democratic republic, where the President of Sudan is head

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<sup>30</sup> "Sudan Population 2018." Sudan Population 2018 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs). February 13, 2018. Accessed March 26, 2018. <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/sudan-population/>.

<sup>31</sup> WTTC. *Travel and Tourism Economic Impact 2017*. Sudan, 2017. <https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2017/sudanandsouthsudan2017.pdf>.



of state, head of government and commander-in-chief of the Sudan People's Armed Forces in a multi-party system<sup>32</sup>. Sudan is currently divided into 18 states headed by a governor and each state has a legislative council and a ministers' cabinet. Each state is divided into a number of localities headed by a commissioner.

### *3.3.2 Democracy vs. Dictatorship*

Much like its history, the governance of Sudan has been anything but simple and straightforward, particularly with regards to the North and the South. The country has witnessed a substantial amount of political instability echoed by the six alternating democratic and military regimes since its independence. In 1989, a military coup was organized and accomplished by the National Islamic Front, led by the current president, Omar A-Bashir. Bashir's rule suspended the constitution and dissolved parliament<sup>33</sup> and further added to the divide between the North and the South. In the past decade however, and through mounting pressure from international and regional authorities, Sudan witnessed a challenging political process prompted by the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), ending a prolonged era of civil war between Northern and Southern Sudan, but also aiding its separation not long after<sup>34</sup>.

In 2010, the government reinstated what it believed to be as democratic values, in honour with its federal presidential representative democratic republic framework. Parliamentary elections were held for the first time in 24 years, with

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<sup>32</sup> Ibbotson, Sophie, and Max Lovell-Hoare. *Sudan*. Globe Pequot Press, 2012.

<sup>33</sup> Ibbotson, Sophie, and Max Lovell-Hoare. *Sudan*. Globe Pequot Press, 2012.

<sup>34</sup> SECURITY, MINISTRY OF WELFARE AND SOCIAL, and NATIONAL POPULATION COUNCIL. *Sudan's National Voluntary Report*. Sudan, 2013.

numerous parties taking part, which heralded a step forward for democracy.

Unfortunately, corruption within the current regime, and allegations of intimidation and gerrymandering were reported. Elections have been held every five years since, but have all been shadowed by claims of false democracy.

### *3.3.3 Sudanese Politics on Tourism*

For years now, Sudan has delighted the opportunity in being a bridge between African and Arab countries. However, politics in Sudan has made this tricky. It governs the economic and social values of the country, and until recently strongly overshadowed the necessity of foreign relations. Prior to the 1989 military coup, Sudan had strong allies with the US and Egypt. The ideologies of the government following the coup however, caused a large strain on foreign relations, particularly with the west, and many other neighbouring countries <sup>35</sup>.

Sudan has begun to invest heavily on establishing more international relations, particularly with the west and strengthening ties with Arabian countries. Most recently, the Turkish president visited Sudan in December 2017, which served to further develop relationships between the two countries. Turkey has long invested in Sudan's infrastructure projects and trade investment, and will continue to do so in agriculture, industry and livestock. Most notably however what has come out of the joint agreement during the Turkish president's most recent visit is the investment into tourism in Port Sudan. Turkey will rebuild a ruined Ottoman port City on Sudan's Red Sea coast and additionally build a naval dock, which will maintain civilian and military vessels, a location that serves to both Turkish and

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<sup>35</sup> Fadlalla Ali, Mohamed Hassan. *Short History of Sudan TT -. TA -. New York : iUniverse, Inc., n.d.*

Sudanese history<sup>36</sup>.



**Figure 28** The ancient Port of Suakin, which is currently being redeveloped into a tourism site by the Turkish government

The area will become a tourist site and transit point for pilgrims crossing the red sea to Saudi Arabia. This is the first step in attracting more international investment into the country. And as word of Sudan's tourism potential, as well as growing number of visitors to the country increase annually; there is hope that this will become a major marketing strategy in gaining more foreign investment into the country.

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<sup>36</sup> Abdelaziz, Khalid, and Ali Kucukgocmen. "Turkey to Restore Sudanese Red Sea Port and Build Naval Dock." Reuters. December 26, 2017. Accessed March 26, 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-sudan-port/turkey-to-restore-sudanese-red-sea-port-and-build-naval-dock-idUSKBN1EK0ZC>.

## Chapter 4: Touring the Sudan

### 4.1 Tourism in Sudan

Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world. Not only is it seen as a source of measurable income, but it also enables people from different cultures to interact with others, breaking the barriers of the unknown, and developing relationships that encourage both economical and personal growth. Those who love to travel find adventure, self-development, meet new people and immerse themselves into new cultural experiences unbeknown to them. At the same time, tourism allows countries to promote their history, cultural heritage architectural character and so much more.

*“Wake at the break of day under the golden pyramids of godlike kings of old, traverse a searing desert to the place where two Niles become one, and watch a million blood-red fish swarm through gardens of coral. Whichever way you look at it, there's just no denying that among Sudan's sweeping hills of sand lie treasures the rest of the world are only just beginning to discover”.*

*- Lonelyplant.com, Welcome to Sudan*

Travelling through Sudan usually begins in the Capital, but branches out along the Nile, where each state promotes their own unique special elements be it the history, landscape, archeological site, or simply the people, music, art and architecture.

#### *4.1.1 The Digital Age and the revitalization of Tourism in Sudan*

The digital age has acted as a platform in showcasing the greater Sudan to people who until recently, only thought of Sudan as a war ridden, poverty plagued country as commonly portrayed by mainstream media. What started as a ‘vicarious outsidersness’ (Relph), it has become a means of bridging the gap between what the country is, and what the outside world have come to know it for. In the age of social media, the use of hash-tags has given people exposure to aspects of countries they would not otherwise see.

The Internet has become an essential marketing tool in gaining people’s attention and directing them to places they may want to visit. For the Sudanese youth, and particularly the diaspora, who tend to visit Sudan more for the purpose of visiting family, than exploring it, it has become a visual connector about what their country has to offer – but most importantly it has become a token of pride, a way to showcase their roots, and a conversation starter to foreign friends who may not have even heard of the country till now.

Tourist websites have begun to include parts of Sudan in their tourist packages, take for instance trip advisor, one of the commonly used online travel agents in the world. They offer vacations to Khartoum and Port Sudan, whilst some websites offer desert trips to the archaeological sites of Nuba. The Internet has become a hotspot for finding new adventures and ‘spreading the word’. Numerous blogs and newspaper posts have begun to surface illustrating people’s adventures in the country, what impression they had before going, where they went and most importantly what they thought and why they are eager for people to visit.

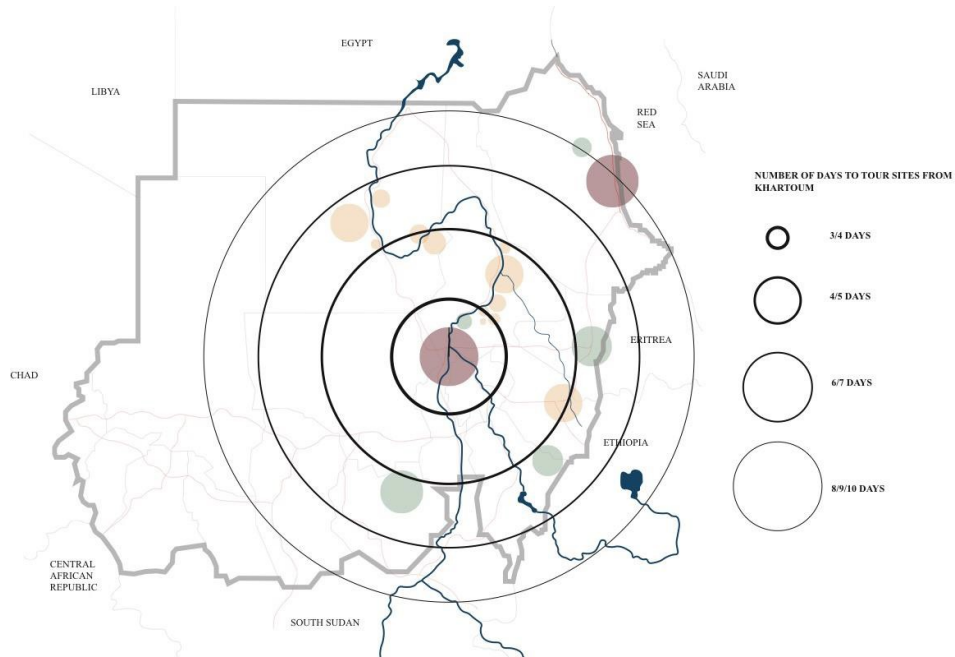
#### *4.1.2 International Recognition – UNESCO World Heritage Center*

Sudan currently has two cultural conservation sites placed on the UNESCO World heritage list, the archeological sites of the island of Meroe and Gebel Barkal, and the Sites of the Napatan Region. In addition, one site has been placed on the natural conservation list – Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab, located in Port Sudan. There are currently five other sites that have been placed on the tentative list for over a decade and all these sites are becoming popular tourist attractions for visitors today, emphasized by their importance by the World Heritage Center.

#### *4.1.3 Getting around Sudan – The development of Sudan's transport infrastructure*

Transportation in Sudan was predominantly done by boat along the Nile, or horses and camels. The growth of exportation of goods to foreign countries aided in the development of the railway system as was the development of the port cities. Roads were developed and expanded to connect the city with various regions in the country and the Nile is still used as a means of passage from one point to another, as well as a leisure activity for tourist.

Whilst considerable development has expanded within the last few decades, infrastructure still lacks in a sizeable share of the country. Rural connectivity is more difficult. However, access to a number of archaeological sites and destinations have improved considerably, with main roads and highways developed to assist in the need for movement to different states –be it for industrial purposes or purely for leisure.



**Figure 29** Tourist Locations around Sudan and the average time spent on these visits, Diagram by author

#### 4.2 Khartoum/Omdurman/Bahri – Sudan’s three-city Capital

Today, Khartoum is not only at the confluence of where the two Niles meet, but its rapid change over the last few years, has seen it become emerged in the global market, with a number of huge investments that can be seen from its high-rise buildings, large number of modern hotels and expanding infrastructure. It is a unification of the modernized Arab world, such as Dubai, and the cultural aesthetics of Africa.

There are food markets and small shops found around certain streets, particularly in the downtown and along Nile Street, which in turn also offer breathtaking views of the River and the City of Omdurman behind it. Khartoum is slowly becoming a modern metropolis. The city is filled with cafes, restaurants and ice cream parlors scattered across the city. It is often easy to find cultural events happening in

Khartoum such as theatre plays, Sudanese haflas (music and dance concerts), shopping malls and sporting events.



**Figure 30** (Left) Khartoum University showcasing colonial architecture, and (right) Sudan's National museum

Essence of the Christian Sudan sits side by side to today's Islamic dominance, with a number of churches scattered across the capital. Khartoum includes all the main governmental and presidential buildings, while the political power is dominant here, extracts of the history is kept in the National Museum, whilst some of the countries varied natural landscapes are preserved in what is called the Sunut Forest – an area of Scented Acacias trees in a particularly arid climate.





**Figure 31** (Top and middle) Images of Khartoum and (bottom) Omdurman, including the market and monumental architectural symbols in the city

Cross the bridge to Omdurman and there is a stark difference noticeable in the city layout. Over 120 years old, it is dominantly a business city and home to the largest souk in Sudan (Figure 31). The souk is alive all day, every day, with evening events and the occasional celebration day parades on the street. Omdurman also offers monuments of history, such as the Khalifas house and Mahdi's tomb.

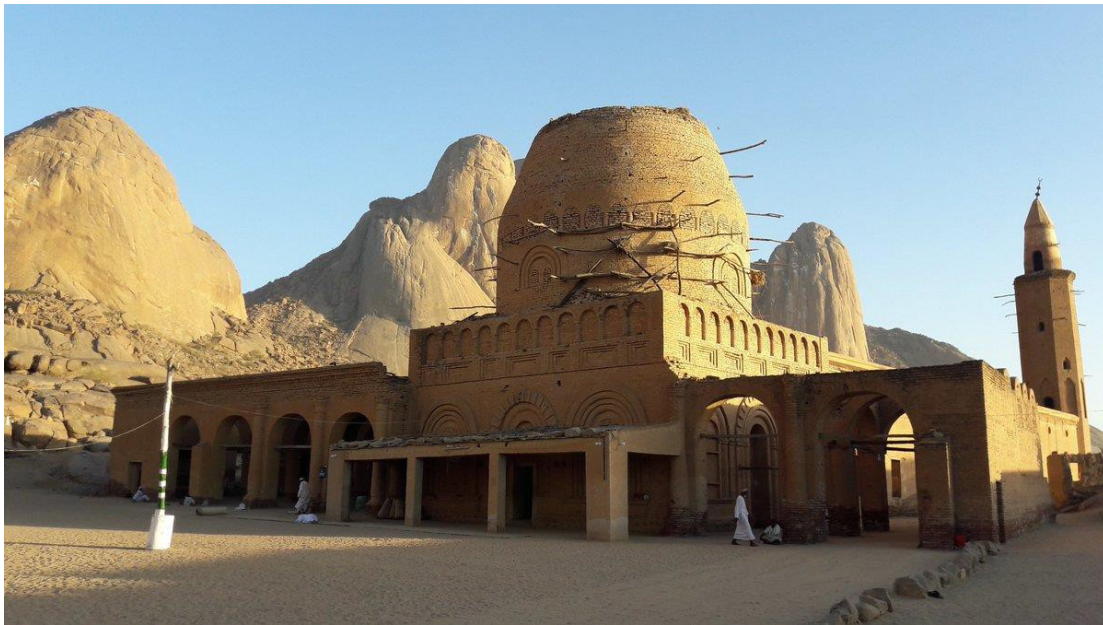


**Figure 32** Omdurman souq (top) and streets (bottom), source: Google images



#### 4.3 Eastern States - Kassala ,AlQadarif and Dinder National Park

Not too far North of Khartoum, and on the path to Port Sudan, is the city of Kassala. Here you see the dominance of city dwellers integrated into the inescapable natural landscapes of the Taka Mountains, with the Khatmiyah Mosque sitting at its base. The Italians occupied this city for a short while, and the population is a mixed one, of different tribes and migrants from outside Sudan. Kassala also houses a number of Souqs that offer fruits and vegetables, traditional village artefacts and souvenirs. Its Souqs are regarded as some of the best in Sudan's.



**Figure 33** Taka Mountains and Alkhatimiyya Mosque

230 km South of Kassala, there is a city known as Alqadarif. There is a famous Sudanese's song called Sim-Sim AlQadarif by Aisha al-Fallatiyah which implies that the sesame seeds cultivated here as the number one products in Sudan's

agriculture. It is predominantly an agricultural town with ‘dwellers cultivating its fertile soil with sorghum, sesame, peanuts and vegetables’<sup>37</sup>.

Tourist may visit this state to explore its agricultural industry, but close by is the Dinder National Park and biosphere reserve. It was believed that the Dinder area used to be heavily populated in the 1890’s, but war and famine caused human population to disappear. Today, it has become an increasingly popular with tourists who enjoy the opportunity to have a safari and is recognised by the World Heritage centre, as a place of significant importance in preserving the natural wildlife. ‘The park lies along the transition ecotone between two floristic regions: the Ethiopian high plateau and the arid Sahara Sudanian biomes’<sup>38</sup>



**Figure 34** Dinder National Park, source: Google images

<sup>37</sup> "El-Gadaf" Wikipedia. March 25, 2018. Accessed March 29, 2018. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El-Gadaf>.

<sup>38</sup> Centre, UNESCO World Heritage. "Dinder National Park." Dinder National Park - UNESCO World Heritage Centre. Accessed March 29, 2018. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1950/>.

#### 4.4 Northern State

Travel further up North of Sudan and you reach what is referred to as the heart of Ancient civilization in the country. The epicenter of Sudan's history is found here, and its archeological site is visible for anyone to see. As archeologist still work to uncover a number of Sudan's hidden treasure, the journey to these sites in the Northern States brings you into the heart of the desert, with the Nile still visible in view, but the landscapes rocky and sandy formation taking center stage. Covered in old tombs, pyramids and temples the sites along the Nile offer scenic views, as well as cultural importance. The planning of the cities and the architecture significance reflects their period of inception and the engravings tell stories of survival and downfall.



**Figure 35** Jebel Barkal and the Pyramids of Nubia, historical archaeological sites within the Northern State

#### 4.5. Port Sudan

Possibly the most famous and common amongst all tourists is the city of Port Sudan. Port Sudan has 853km of coastline stretching along the red sea from Egypt to Eritrea<sup>39</sup>. It is not only the country's most important connection to the outside world, but it has one of the most famous scuba diving areas, renowned for its, coral reef and wrecks. Port Sudan also houses historical relics of Ottoman buildings and ports and mountainous landscape, amongst the sandy and rocky landscape of the Desert.



**Figure 36** Destinations within Port Sudan from the Ottoman Buildings in Suakin (top), to the coral reef of the Red Sea

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<sup>39</sup> Ibbotson, Sophie, and Max Lovell-Hoare. *Sudan*. Globe Pequot Press, 2012.



## Chapter 5: Site Analysis

### 5.1 Geographical Makeup

Sudan is both culturally and geographically diverse, showcasing the two very different sides of Africa. The Nile travels through the savannas and rainforests of central Africa to the dry desert north of the Sahara. Thus, on the territories of Sudan almost all major types of landscapes that Africa can offer, can be seen besides location, size of the territory also plays an important role<sup>40</sup>. The geographical diversity coincides with the development of different building typologies, influenced strongly by the climate of the region.



**Figure 37** Diagram illustrating the four geographical regions, diagram by author

<sup>40</sup> "Sudan." Tourist Maker. 2018. Accessed March 28, 2018. <http://www.touristmaker.com/sudan/>.

Each region of Sudan has a particular climate, geography and design typology associated with it. The building typologies, city and village layouts also adhere to the culture and traditions of the locals that has progressed throughout the history of the country. The landscapes have, like many other cities, been a factor in which both urban sprawl and suburban (village in this case) growth have developed. Religion and periods of colonization have all been direct influences of the development of these places, and changes in global perspectives of architecture and urban planning have begun to be seen within larger cities, evident from the modern architectural style seen in many other developing and developed countries.

#### *5.1.1 Eastern Sudan*

The climate here is classified as a warm desert/semi-arid, with little rainfall experienced during the dry months between January and March. Rain season typically falls during the months of July – August.

The building typologies illustrate the importance of the geographical landscape in the placement of both public and private structures. The Khatimiyya mosque, was built during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, using soil that was brought over from Mecca<sup>41</sup>. A plain brick structure, the mosque sits on a backdrop of the Taka Mountains and forms a central monumental space.

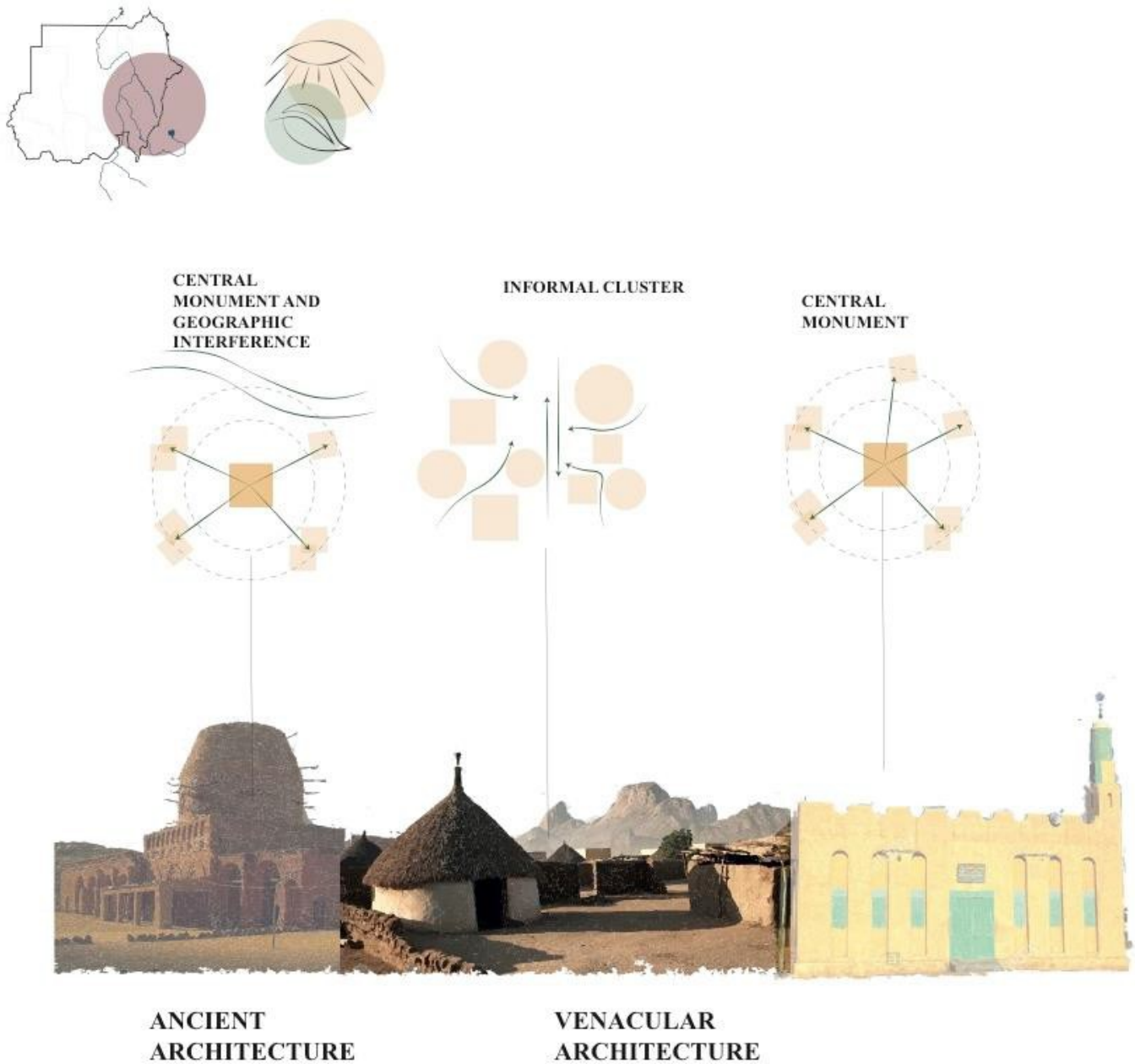
The vernacular architecture of this city and many others in Eastern Sudan comprises a mixture of huts and mud brick houses, arranged in clusters. These give way to narrow streets allowing for the ease of movement between the dwelling, and

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<sup>41</sup> "Geography of Sudan." Wikipedia. May 12, 2018. Accessed May 18, 2018. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography\\_of\\_Sudan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Sudan).

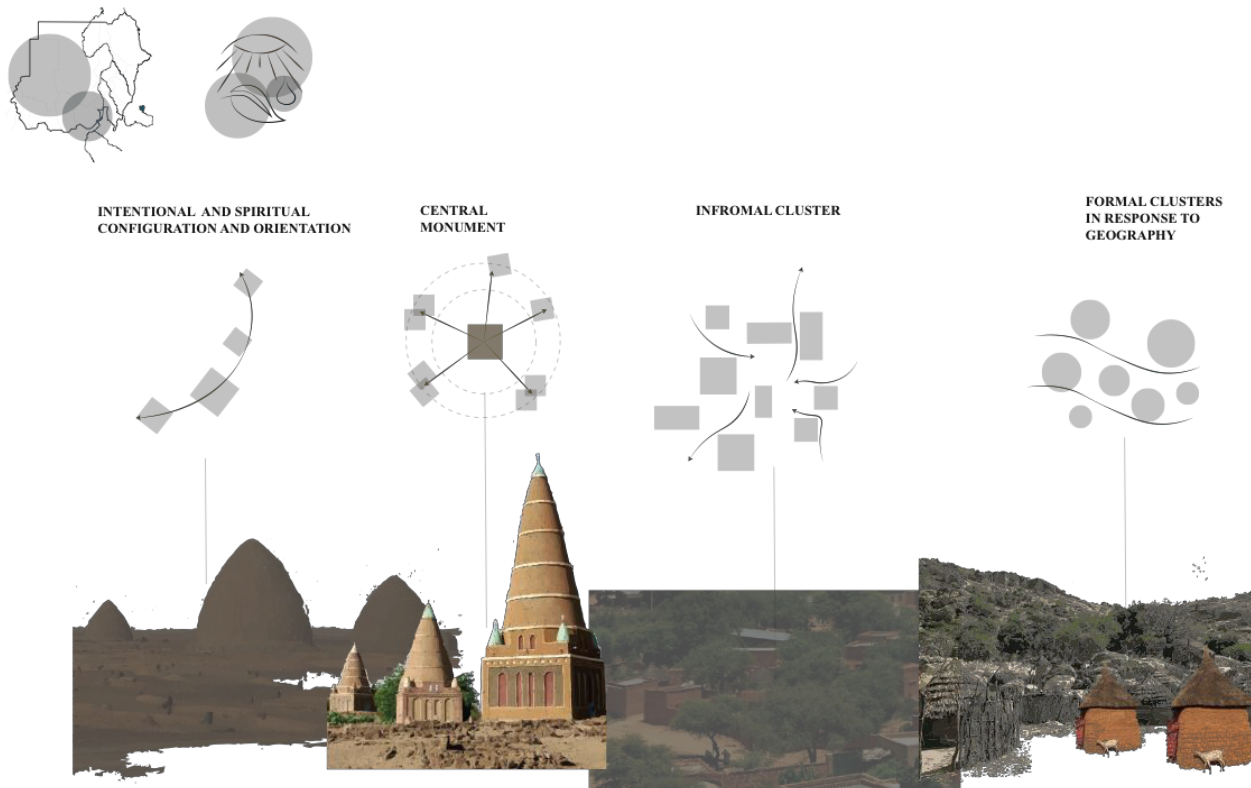


central focal points which are dominated by religious monuments, and the natural landscape.



**Figure 38** Building typologies found in Eastern Sudan, diagram by author

### 5.1.2 Western and Southern Sudan



**Figure 39** Building typologies in Western and Southern Sudan, diagram by author

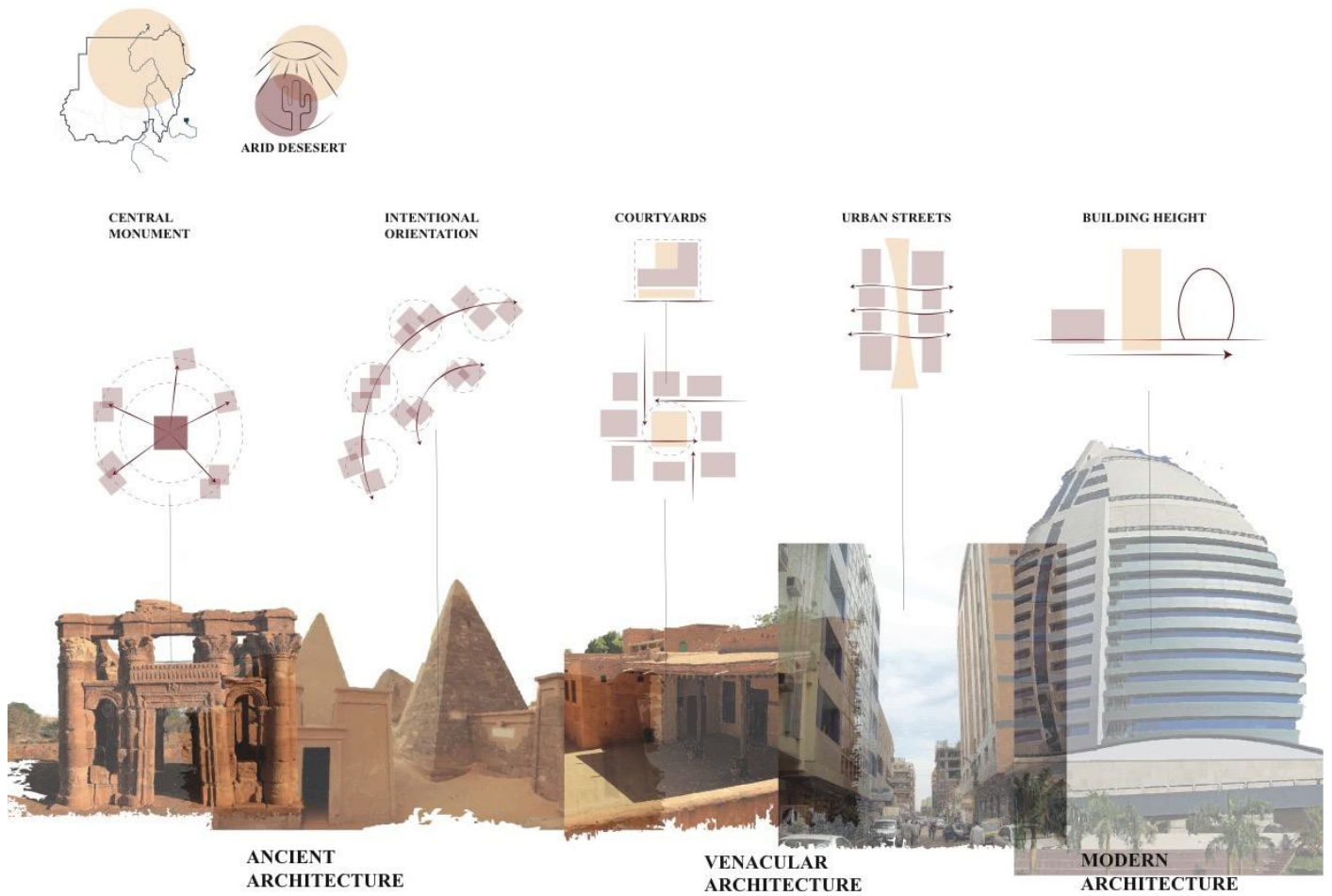
The climate in both West and South Sudan is generally a warm arid/ tropical savannah. The architecture here tends to differ significantly from other parts of Sudan, typically due to the nomadic lifestyle of the residents who live there. Western Sudan is known for its agricultural importance in the country, and subsequently many of its dwellings are built around the landscape (within mountainous terrains), in clusters. Central monuments like that in Eastern Sudan is evident in the ‘quyittiah’ tombs that house people of high Calibri in history, and reflect the Sufi saint tombs found in the

North Western location of the country. These are constructed from mud-bricks and today this type of construction can be seen in some of the huts and dwelling of the area.

### *5.1.3 Northern Sudan – Nile Valley*

This region of the country is perhaps the most well-known for its history and archeological importance. The climate here is a warm arid desert climate, with a hot dry season between January to March and a monsoon season period from July to September. The architecture here has evolved significantly since the Nubian period, particularly in Khartoum. Although weather is still an influencing factor in the choice of materials used and types of buildings constructed, the introduction of new technology and modern architecture have begun to redefine parts of the urban landscape, in terms of size, height and materiality.

While this is a big change that is occurring in the city, other parts of Northern Sudan still pay homage to the growth of planned cities by the Nubians, such as the central monumental religious elements and public social spaces by the Christians and Arabs, or the iron grid fabric laid out by the British, that formed formal clusters in the city for security and efficiency.



**Figure 40** Building typologies in Northern Sudan, diagram by author

## 5.2 Urbanization in the three-city Capital

### 5.2.1 *Site History – Defining the City Fabric*



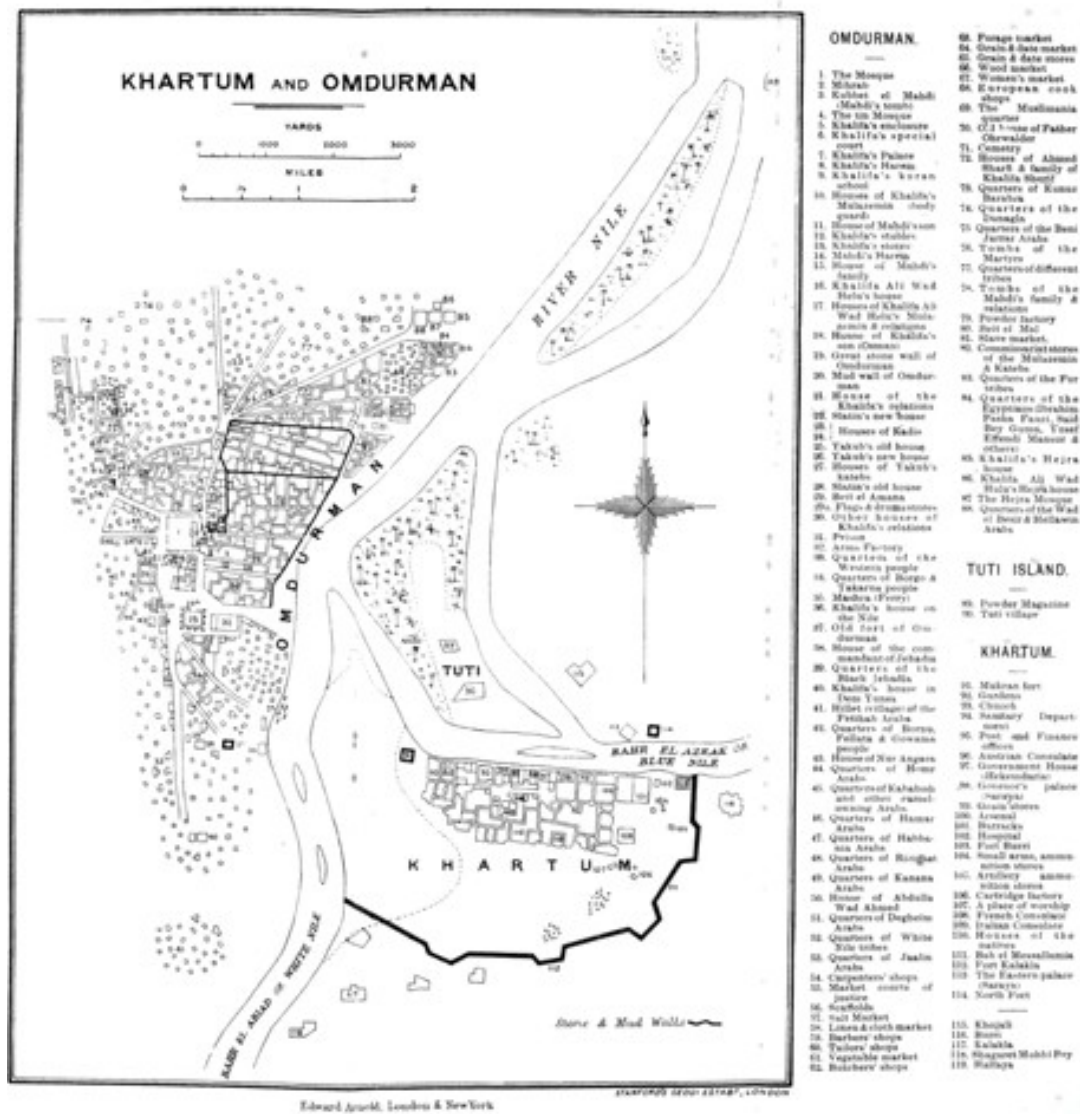
**Figure 41** Google Earth image of the three-city capital

Khartoum, North Khartoum and Omdurman; together these three cities form what is known today as Sudan three-city capital, with the country's political and economic power largely based in Khartoum. Omdurman is known as the cultural capital, and Khartoum North is the industrial capital. To define the city's urban fabric is to understand the history behind their spatial development, particularly that of Khartoum and Omdurman. Omdurman and Khartoum are captivating centers, providing an insightful look into the history of Sudan, which has powerfully impacted the urban layout and architecture.

### ***Khartoum***

The village of Almogran was one of the first settlements from which modern Khartoum grew. The village, regarded as no more than a fishing village during the Nubian era, was the main settlement in the area where the Blue and the White Nile merged. The hydrological landform features naturally created three separate regions, establishing the three different cities. The history of those three settlements dates back to the 16th century, but their development period began during the 19th century during the Turkish-Egyptian rule. The Turkish development of Khartoum resulted in the city resembling a typical Ottoman city, surrounded by defensive walls with gates to allow secured passage to and from the city. Buildings in Khartoum, including the more formal ones, developed with influences from European architects, and these are still visible today.

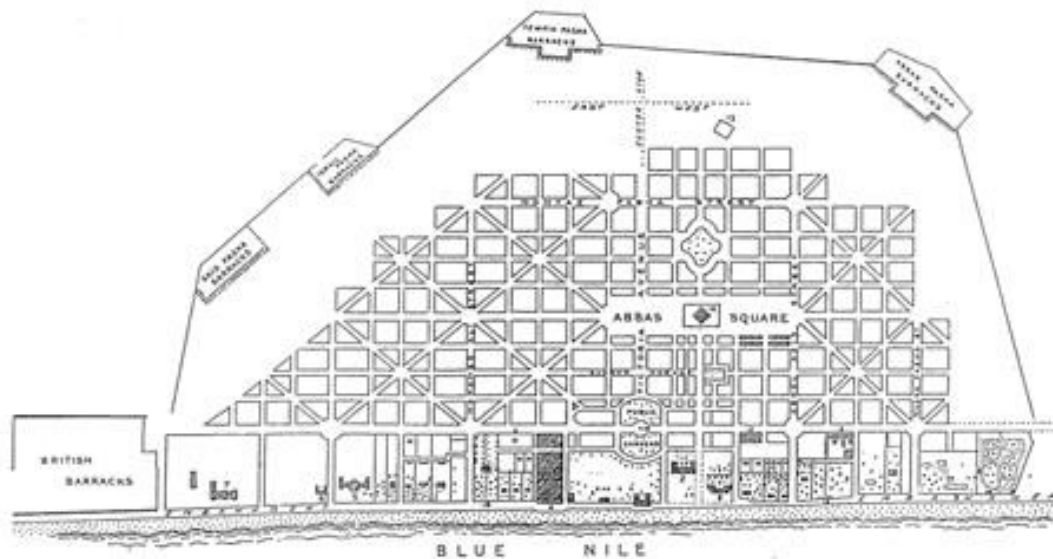




**Figure 42** Map of Khartoum at the end of the 19th Century, Source Rudolf C. Slatin, Fire and Sword in the Sudan. A Personal Narrative of Fighting and Serving the Dervishes 1879–1895, London – New York, 1896, p. 630

During the colonial rule, Lord Krischner, alongside Milo Talbot .F. Gorrington John Maxwell, W.H. Mclean and Ebenezer Howard, developed an urban plan of the city which was loosely based on the Union Jack and iron grid system common within the colonial rule. The plan of Khartoum can be characterized as defined, orthogonal, on which a multi-axes layout was superimposed. The urban planning and architecture of the town were also modeled on colonial cities, among which Khartoum was to be

“the jewel in the crown” of black Africa<sup>42</sup>. The combination of an orthogonal layout with multi-axes provided an opportunity for better control and faster reaction in the case of a possible uprising or an attack of enemy troops. Some of the districts were developed into garden cities. Building blocks singled out due to the orthogonal layout were intended for dwellings for native inhabitants. The buildings of the British and Egyptian military quarters, connected to the then political situation of Sudan, were located on the city boundary where the railway line was later to run<sup>43</sup>. The banks of the Blue Nile were reserved for public utility buildings, some of which have are still in use today.



**Figure 43** Plan of Khartoum designed by Lord Kitchner, at the beginning of the 20th Century, depicting a strong iron grid, with orthogonal streets

<sup>42</sup> Seif Sadig Hassan\*, and Osman Elkheir. "Urban Planning of Khartoum. History and Modernity Part I. History." *Urban Planning of Khartoum. History and Modernity Part I. History*, May 5, 2017, 1-9. Accessed May 1, 2018.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid



### *Omdurman*

Omdurman became the capital of Sudan during the Mahdist rule. The city was built from the ruins of Khartoum and developed as a center with strong Arabic-Islamic traditions<sup>44</sup>. Omdurman developed through an 'undefined, chaotic morphology of which was a direct effect of quick and sketchy land designation made for Al-Mahdis' battalion which settled in the prior to the battle of Khartoum'<sup>45</sup>. Land was spontaneously divided through no well-regulated plan, with compounds formed for each individual military family. Communication system formed as a result of gradual subdivisions of the compounds between the family members, with small alleys forming along subdivided properties.

Following the death of Al-Mahid and Al Khalifa, the city was converted into a military compound. Walls surrounded the city, mosques was built, and the Mahdi's tomb, and Khalifas house became monumental buildings in the city, while the main town square served as a market and military headquarters. The organic urban structure was gradually tidied up. However, it does not match the planned urban grid of Khartoum, and still is very apparent as you drive between the two cities. Even with attempts to regulate the growth of residential districts, they still sprawled in an uncontrolled way, characterized as chaotic, with small open spaces and architecturally homogeneous buildings. The cities location on barren soil also aids in the lack of greenery in the city, another feature that distinguishes it from its neighboring Khartoum

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<sup>44</sup> Seif Sadig Hassan\*, and Osman Elkheir. "Urban Planning of Khartoum. History and Modernity Part I. History." *Urban Planning of Khartoum. History and Modernity Part I. History*, May 5, 2017, 1-9. Accessed May 1, 2018.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid



**Figure 44** Views of Buildings in Omdurman around the 20th Century, Source Wiadomości Konserwatorskie , Journal of Heritage Conservation, May 2017



**Figure 45** Mahdi's tomb in Omdurman is till this day a significant religious symbol within the country

### 5.3 Site Selection – Khartoum

The capital city of Sudan was chosen due to its location within the heart of Sudan, its large and diverse population, its connection point with the rest of the world (the Khartoum international airport is located within this city) and its cultural and historical significance, as a first point of contact for visitors who come to tour Sudan. Upon analyzing the city, three sites were chosen for analysis for this thesis. The following sites were as follows:



**Figure 46** Potential Site Location, Source: Google Earth, edited by author

1. AlMogran - this is located in Khartoum at the peninsula of Khartoum city, directly looking onto the 'Mogran' – where the White Nile meets the Blue Nile. It is also located in between the dense urban grid layout of Khartoum and the Arabic-Islamic layout of Omdurman, but separated from Omdurman by the White Nile. Views of Omdurman, Khartoum and Tuti



Island are all visible from the site. In addition the site was originally developed to grade for a development project that did not proceed and as of now is currently unoccupied.

- a. The site is 15 acres
- b. It is privately owned and develop with all the necessary infrastructure



**Figure 47** Al Mogran Development Site, Location 1 source: Google Earth

2. Tuti Island, location 1 – this is located on Tuti Island, which is at the center of which the 3-cities surround. Tuti Island is home to a vast amount of agricultural land, and residential land at its heart. It has been named as the rural portion of the city. There is one bridge that currently links Khartoum with Tuti Island and the site sits directly to the left of the bridge. Tuti also has a series of irregular streets, with a current loop street being developed.

- a. The site is 10 acres
- b. This is privately owned and semi-developed



**Figure 48** Tuti Island development site, Location 2, source: Google Images

- 3. Tuti Island, location 2 – The second site is located on the tip of Tuti Island. A new bridge is being developed that connects this part of island with Omdurman, as well as the development of the ring road which will connect the Khartoum-Tuti Bridge, to the site location.
  - a. The site is 28 acres
  - b. This is owned by the government and partially by local residence.



**Figure 49** Tuti Island development site Location3, source: Google Earth

The three sites were analyzed using a site matrix that was developed to address the viability of the site in terms of seven key categories – transportation, natural hazards, proximity, quality of neighborhood, sustainability potential and ultimately market potential.

#### 5.4 Site Analysis

Following the generation of the site matrix a site analysis of the three sites (which all happen to be within a 2-mile radius of one another), which addressed the categories highlighted in the site matrix.

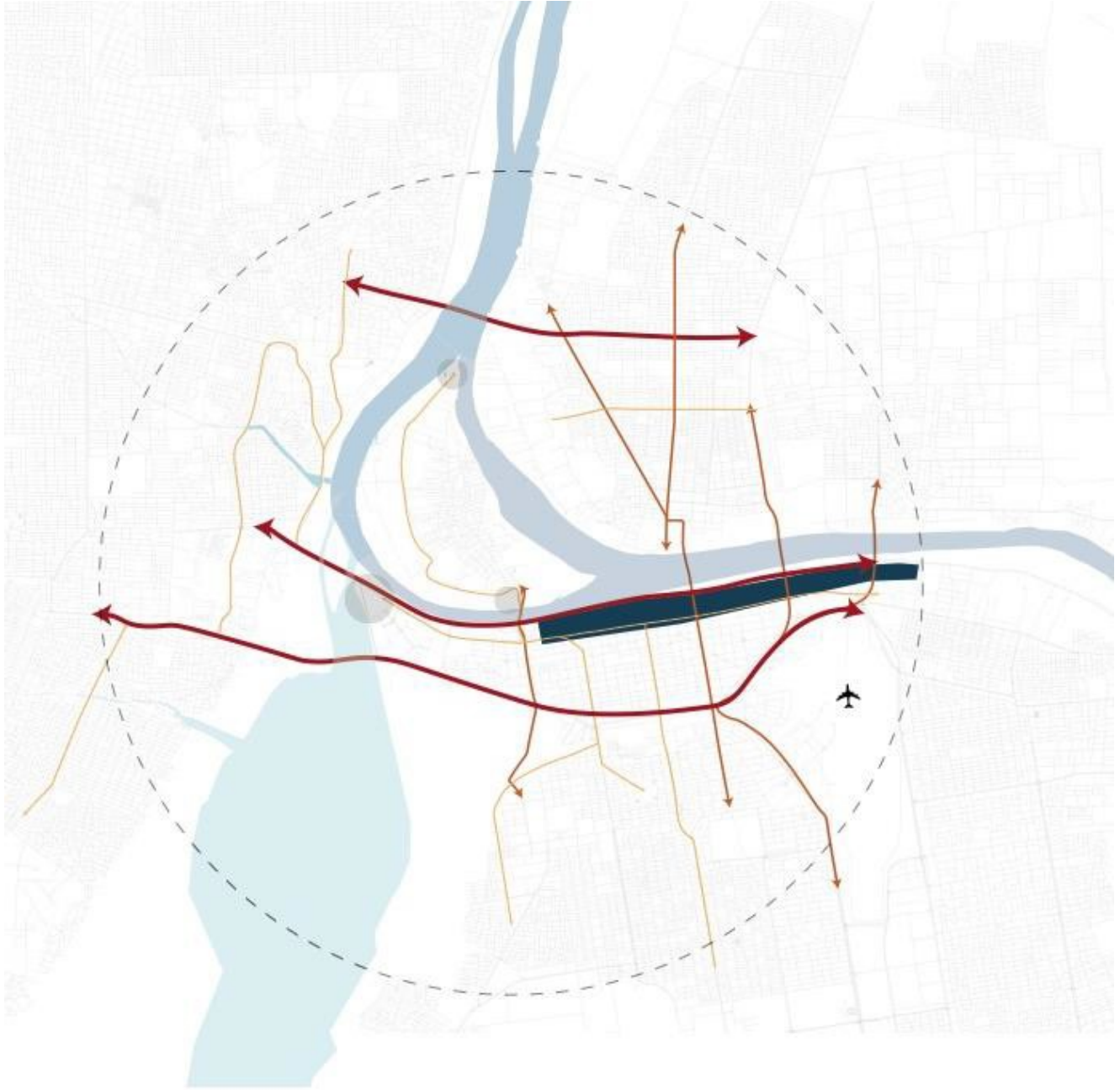




**Figure 50** Figure ground diagram showing urban fabric of Khartoum and Omdurman (Scale 1:25000), diagram by author



**Figure 51** (left) Omdurman Urban Fabric and (right) Khartoum Urban Fabric, source: Google Earth

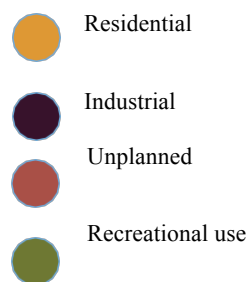


**Figure 52** Primary, secondary and tertiary circulation with the selected sites, and between Khartoum, Omdurman and North Khartoum (1:2500), diagram by author



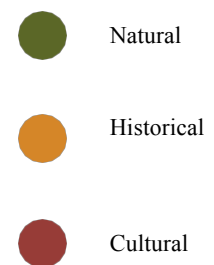


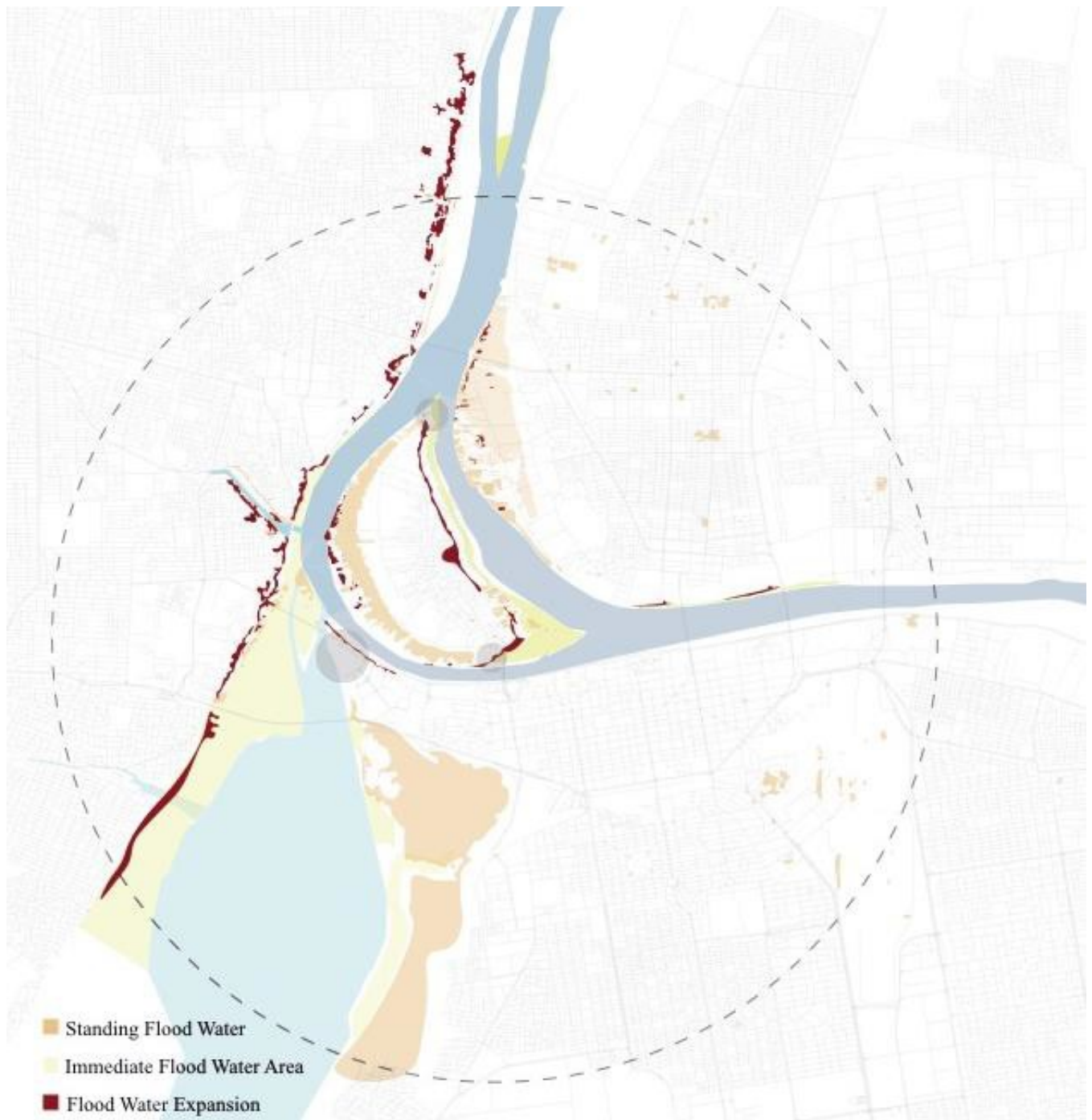
**Figure 53** Land Use diagram - it is important to note that the residential areas are divided into three categories - 1st, 2nd, 3rd and correspond with order of class with the fist being the higher-class citizens (Scale 1:2500), diagram by author





**Figure 54** Proximity to attraction:, cultural, historical and natural, diagram by author (Scale 1:2500)



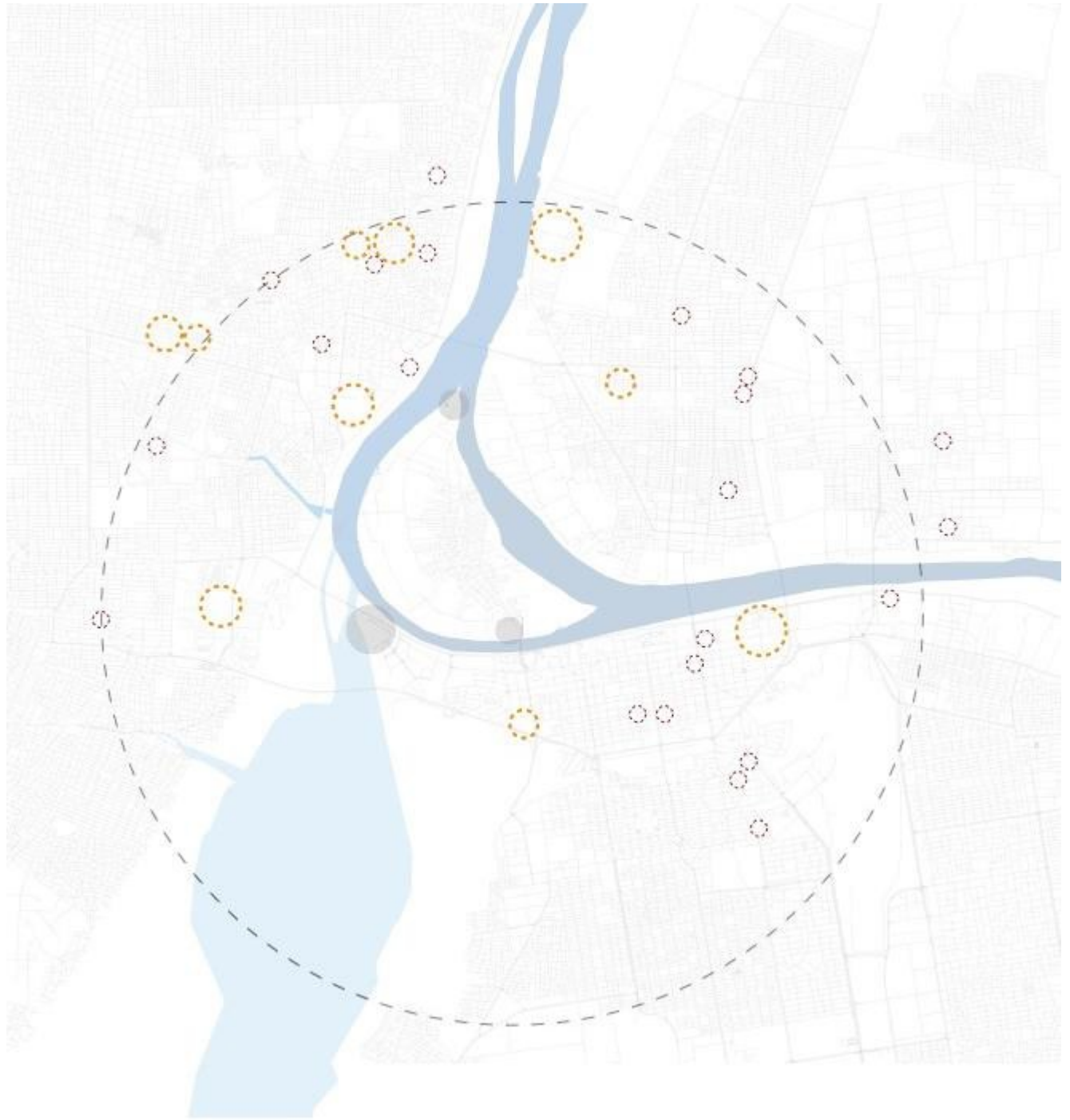


**Figure 55** Diagram illustrating flood zones within the city, diagram by author (Scale 1:2500)



**Figure 56** Location of Hotels (red) near to the site (Sites indicated in yellow), diagram by author (Scale 1:2500)

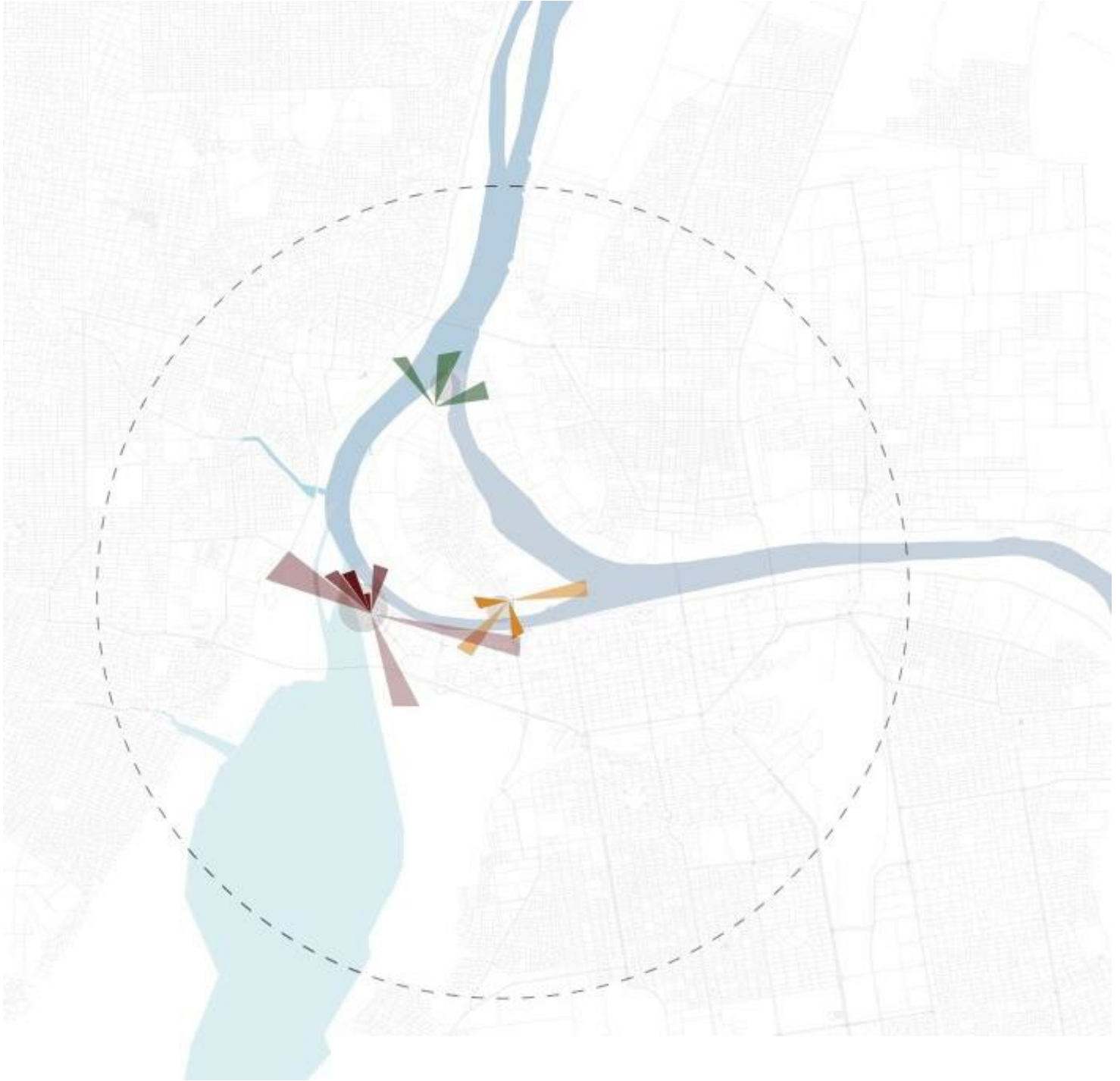




**Figure 57** Location of Universities and School, diagram by author (Scale 1:2500)



**Figure 58** Diagram illustrating the agricultural landscapes along the Nile and Northern Sudan



**Figure 59** Views from the three selected sites, looking to various locations along the Nile and to different cities, diagram by author (Scale 1:2500)

## Site Matrix

The site matrix was used to rank each of the qualities of the chosen sites in order of strength, with green - strong, yellow – medium, and red – weak. The site matrix indicated that the best site for the project was site 1. Al Mogran development.

	AL MOGRAN LOCATION 1	TUTI LOCATION 2	TUTI LOCATION 3
<b>Transportation</b>			
Proximity to Airport	Green	Yellow	Yellow
Car	Green	Green	Green
Boat	Green	Green	Green
Foot	Green	Yellow	Yellow
Bus	Yellow	Red	Red
Train	Red	Red	Red
<b>Natural Hazards</b>			
Flooding Barrier	Green	Red	Red
Erosion Barrier	Green	Red	Red
<b>Proximity</b>			
Residential	Red	Green	Green
Commercial	Green	Yellow	Yellow
Industrial	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Institutional	Green	Yellow	Yellow
<b>Quality of Neighbourhood</b>			
Aesthetics	Green	Green	Yellow
Income	Green	Red	Red
Views from Site	Green	Green	Green
<b>Sustainability Potential</b>			
Solar	Green	Green	Green
Water	Green	Green	Green
Vegetation/Agriculture	Yellow	Green	Green
<b>Local Environment</b>			
Proximity to attractions	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Safety	Green	Green	Green
Reputation of Area	Green	Green	Green
Level of Development	Green	Red	Yellow
<b>Market Potential</b>			
	Green	Yellow	Yellow

**Figure 60** Site Matrix - It is important to note that prior the design phase of the thesis a more extensive Market Analysis will be conducted to determine the Market potential and necessary use of the site to be viable as a development project (Green – Strong, Yellow – Average, Red – Weak)





**Figure 61** Al Mogran Development, site images

## Chapter 6: Precedent Study

Cultural centers exist as a bridge that gaps between the old and the new, the different and the familiar, and educate a generation of people about their heritage whilst simultaneously showcasing their history to a foreign audience. The Cultural Complex of Sudan aims to engage tourists and natives about the country's role in ancient civilizations, the dense historical past, influenced by the diverse geographical regions that today impacts its varied culture.

The precedents studies contribute to the four key factors used to understand the makeup of the country – geography, culture, history and identity. The following precedents are analyzed for these particular qualities, but in addition the spatial configurations and interesting spatial sequences, that at times showcase different elements of the building and site together – a design strategy that will be emphasized throughout the design approach to program and space making.

### 6.1 Sheik Jaber Al Ahmad Cultural Center

**Location:** Gulf Road, Kuwait City, Kuwait

**Size:** 14.31 Acres

The cultural complex is one of three complexes that are a part of the new Kuwait National Cultural District. The development project focuses on the arts and culture in Kuwait, and is a member of the Global Cultural District Network - a federation of global centers of arts and culture that fosters cooperation and

knowledge-sharing among those responsible for conceiving, funding, building, and operating cultural district and/or clusters with a significant cultural element<sup>46</sup>.

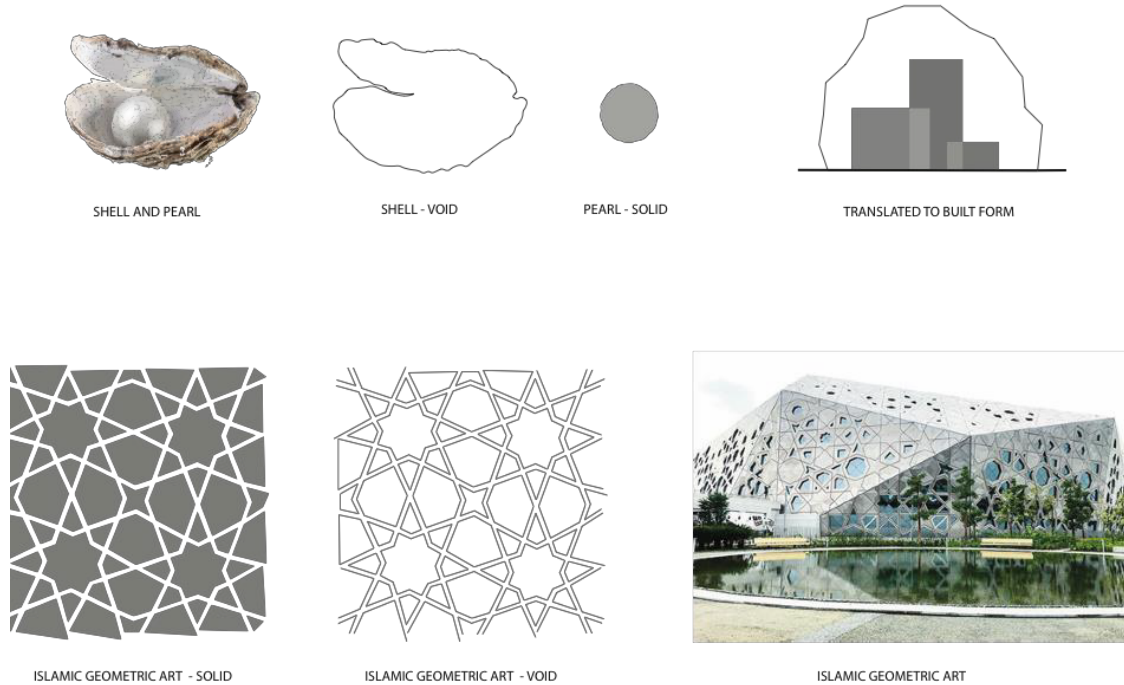


**Figure 62** Sheik Jaber Al Ahmad Cultural Center, Siting between the city and Kuwait Bay, source: Kuwait Times

Designed as both a cultural center and opera house, the center is a multidisciplinary public space that aims to entertain, educate and inspire both the people of Kuwait, and its visitors. It offers a place for cultural exchange, offering spaces for dialogue between different generations in the form of artistic expression and educational exhibition spaces for all visitors. Its location on the Gulf Road and along the Kuwait Bay, creates beautiful scenic views that bridge the city to the bay.

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<sup>46</sup> "Kuwait National Cultural District." Wikipedia. April 11, 2018. Accessed April 21, 2018. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuwait\\_National\\_Cultural\\_District](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuwait_National_Cultural_District).



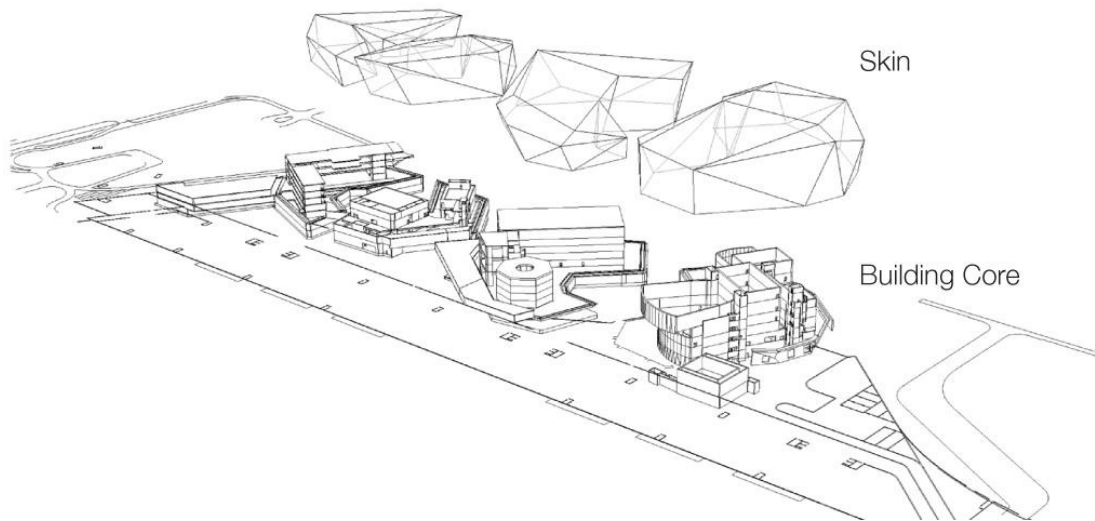
**Figure 63** Design concept - the shell + pearl and Islamic geometric shapes, diagram by author

The center is designed around culture and aesthetics. There are two main design concepts that embody the identity of the center, both of which are rooted deep in Kuwait's rich cultural traditions.

*The Shell + Pearl* – The idea of the pearl is rooted in Kuwait's cultural History. Kuwait is infamous for its pearl diving and trade industry and this was highlighted in the design of the four buildings. The solid and void defines the relationship between the seashell and the pearl, but is also a metaphor in Kuwaiti culture for 'finding the important core within the beautiful, complex environment'.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Mubarak, Rashed. "Jaber AlSabah Culutral Center", lecture, Kuwait City, October 2017

The building is designed to have an interior structure (the solid) that is independent of an exterior shell (the void)



**Figure 64** exploded axonometric drawing showing exterior shells independent of interior structure, source: DSA Engineering

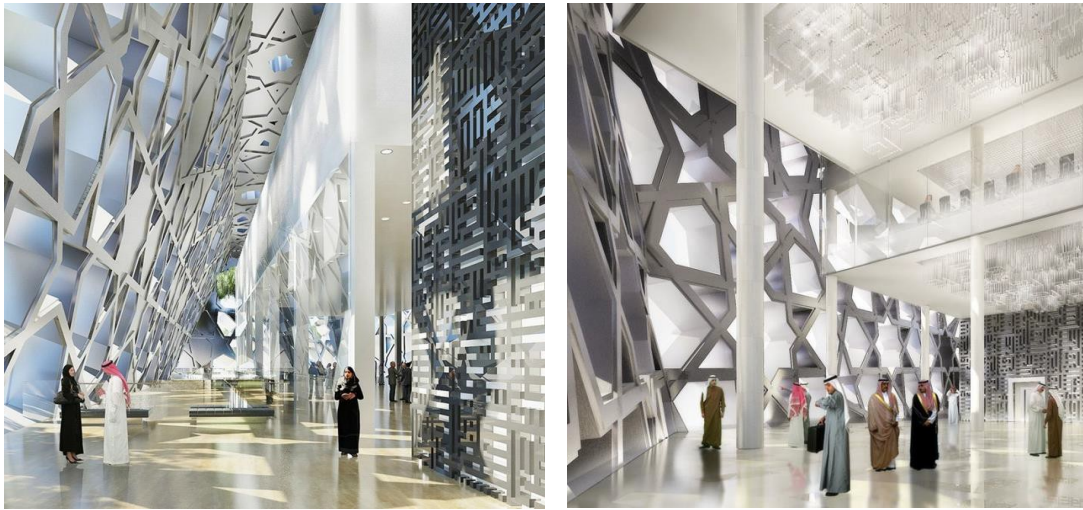
*Islamic Geometric Patterns* – The shell/skin is used to tell a story of Kuwait’s rich Islamic history. The patterns are inspired by Islamic cosmic geometry, and allows for natural light to be diffused into the core, whilst creating interesting contrasts of light and shadow. The ‘Geometric apertures decrease in size towards the top’ controlling how much cool daylight is allowed into the hallways and interior structure and ‘minimizing the hot direct noon sun’. In addition, the shell performs as a ‘living organism skin with a network of water collection gutters that perform as veins’<sup>48</sup>.

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<sup>48</sup> Mubarak, Rashed. “Jaber AlSabah Culutral Center”, lecture, Kuwait City, October 2017



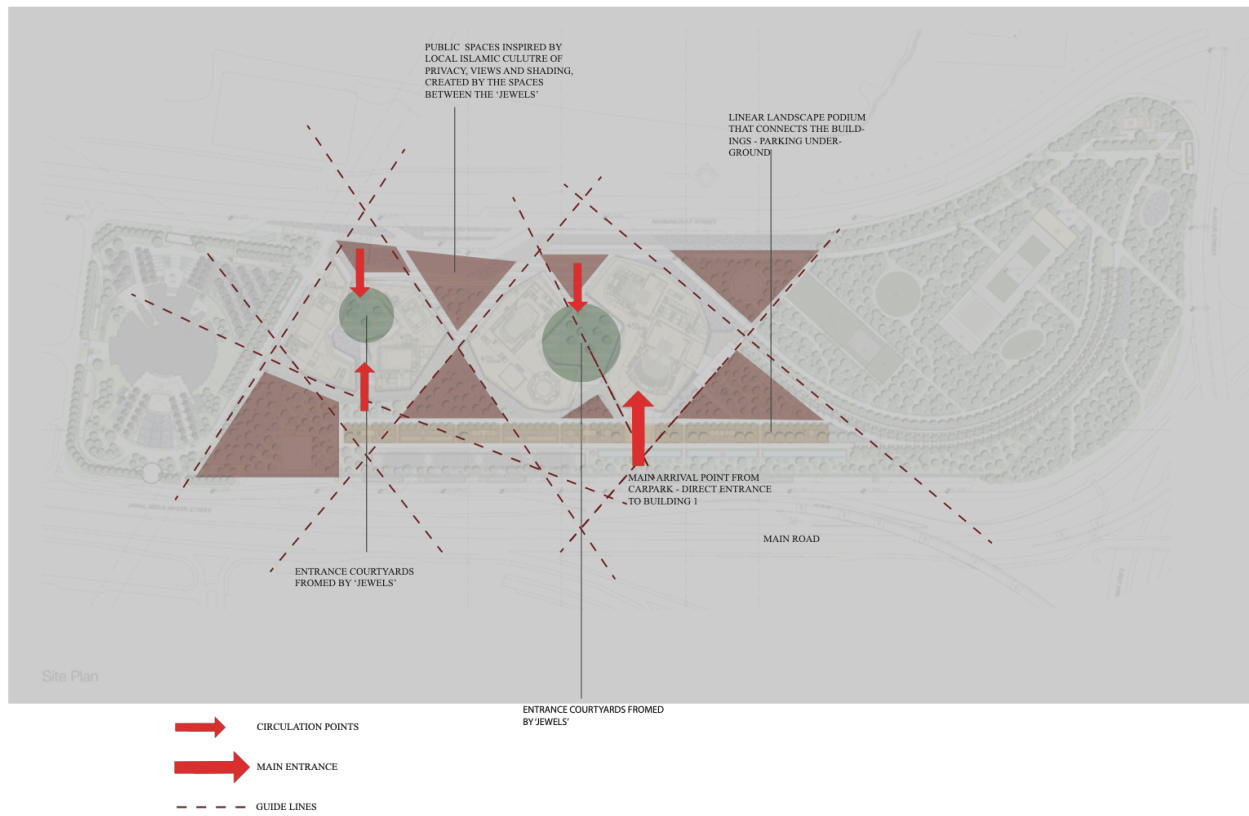
The orientation and location of the four buildings creates dramatic public space, which are emphasized by the contrast of light and shadow. ‘Local culture is reinterpreted within the buildings by using technology to deliver complexity with simplicity’<sup>49</sup>. The design reiterates the cultural need for privacy, views and shading and the interior courtyard/public spaces between each building re-emphasizes this.

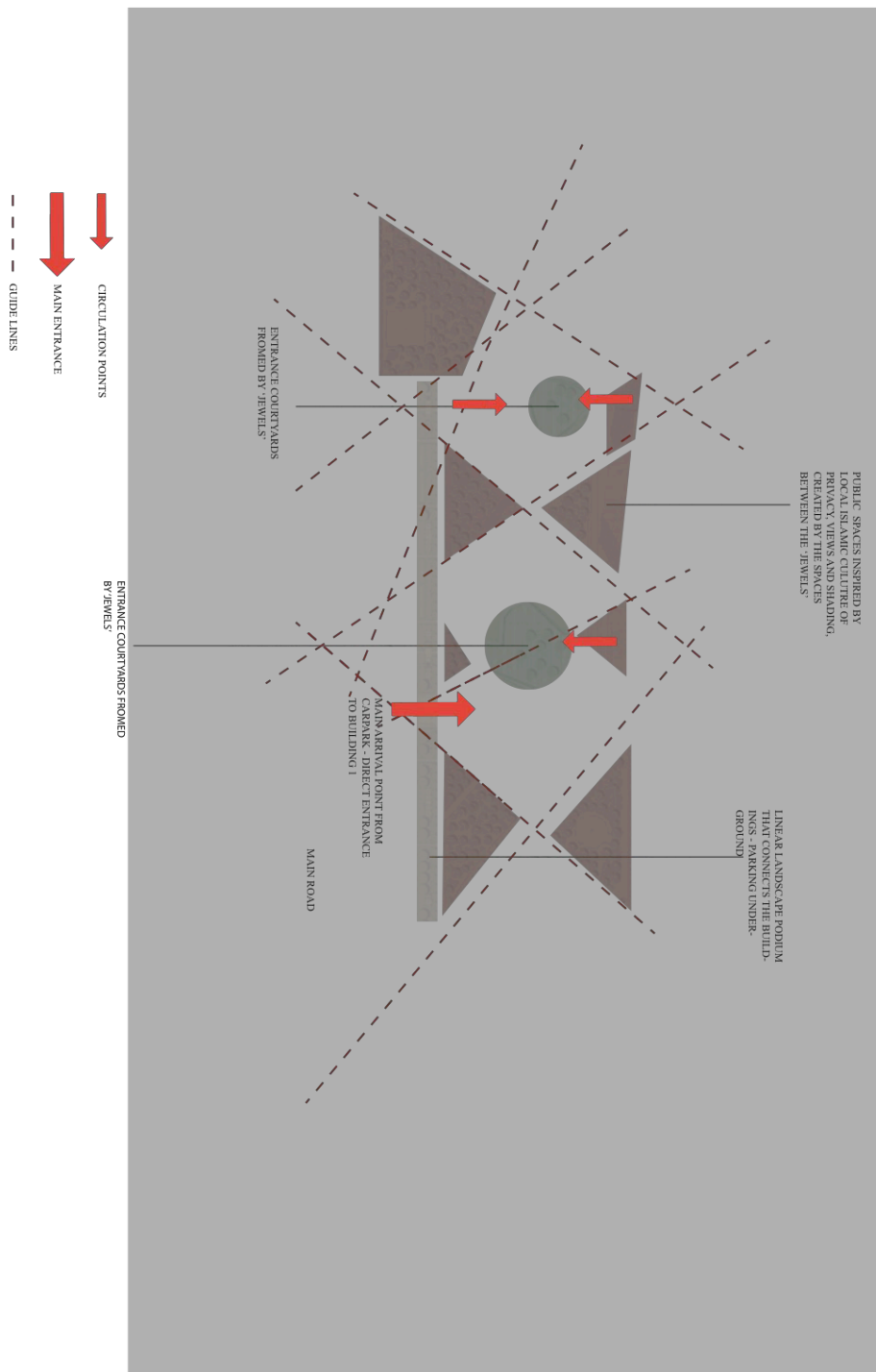


**Figure 65** Interior image of the Cultural Center, source: DSA Engineering

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<sup>49</sup> Mubarak, Rashed. “Jaber Al-Sabab Culutral Center”, lecture, Kuwait City, October 2017



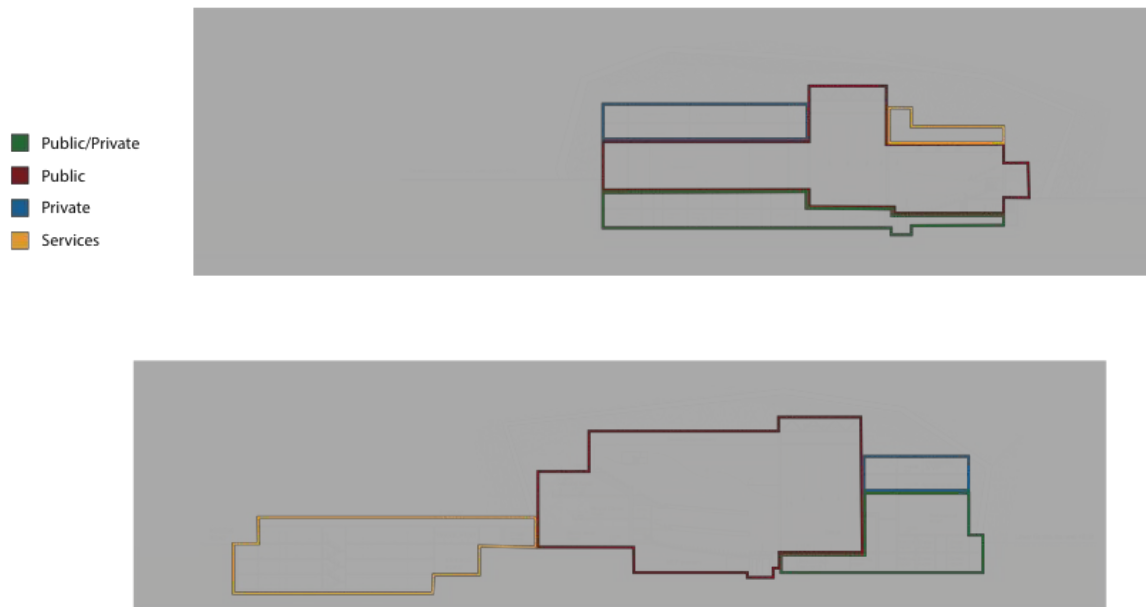


**Figure 66** Site Plan showcasing interior courtyard spaces formed by structures, landscape formation and circulation points Diagram edited by Author

A linear landscaped podium to the back of the buildings links the buildings where the car parks and certain service areas are situated below ground. Gardens and



pedestrian paving are created to give a clear circulation throughout the site, with the layout pulling from the harsh geometric lines created by the four buildings.



**Figure 67** Sections – Relationship with each interior space and connection to exterior, diagram edited by Author

## 6.2 Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Complex

**Location:** Al Shaab, Kuwait City, Kuwait

**Size:** 13 Acres Site – 236,806.03 sqft Exhibition Area

Located on the western shore and the second of three cultural clusters, the Sheik Abdullah Al Salem Cultural complex is the largest museum project in the world. Celebrating the worlds scientific and cultural achievements, the center honors Kuwait's Islamic and Arab culture and history.



**Figure 68** Sheik Abdullah Al Salem Culutral Complex, source: SSH Architects

Consisting on six main buildings that house different exhibitions, both permanent and temporary, branched of a main street, which is designed to mimic the experience of walking down the traditional busy Kuwait street<sup>50</sup>. Islamic patterns visible on the façade, corners and inner walkways, and the solar shade canopy aimed at ‘echoing the traditional Ferej’<sup>51</sup> is used to highlight the traditional Kuwait architecture. The building serves as one of the countries iconic developments, both in terms of architecture and functionality.

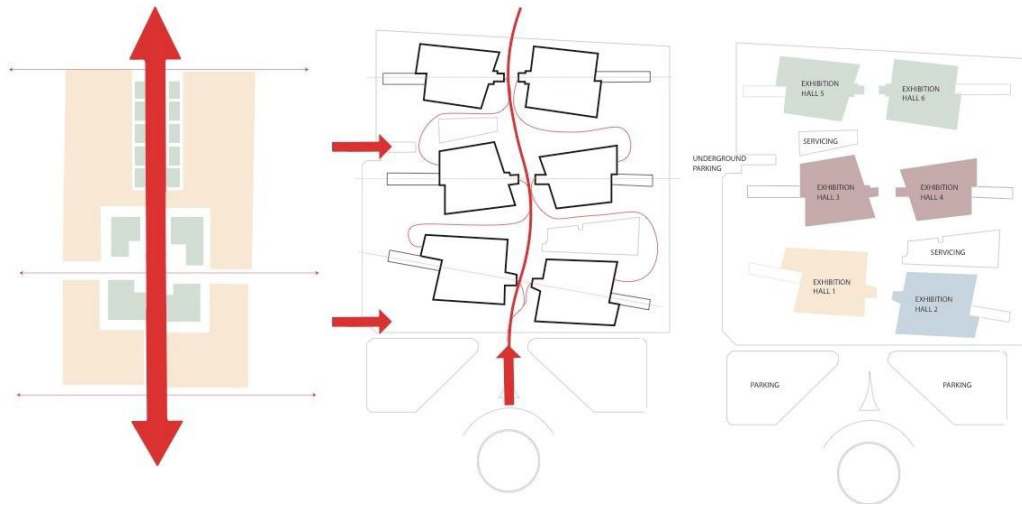
<sup>50</sup> "BECK Set to Work on Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre, Kuwait." Museums Heritage Advisor. November 13, 2015. Accessed April 22, 2018. <http://advisor.museumsandheritage.com/supplier-news/beck-set-to-work-on-sheikh-abdullah-al-salem-cultural-centre-kuwait/>.

<sup>51</sup> "BECK Set to Work on Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre, Kuwait." Museums Heritage Advisor. November 13, 2015. Accessed April 22, 2018. <http://advisor.museumsandheritage.com/supplier-news/beck-set-to-work-on-sheikh-abdullah-al-salem-cultural-centre-kuwait/>.

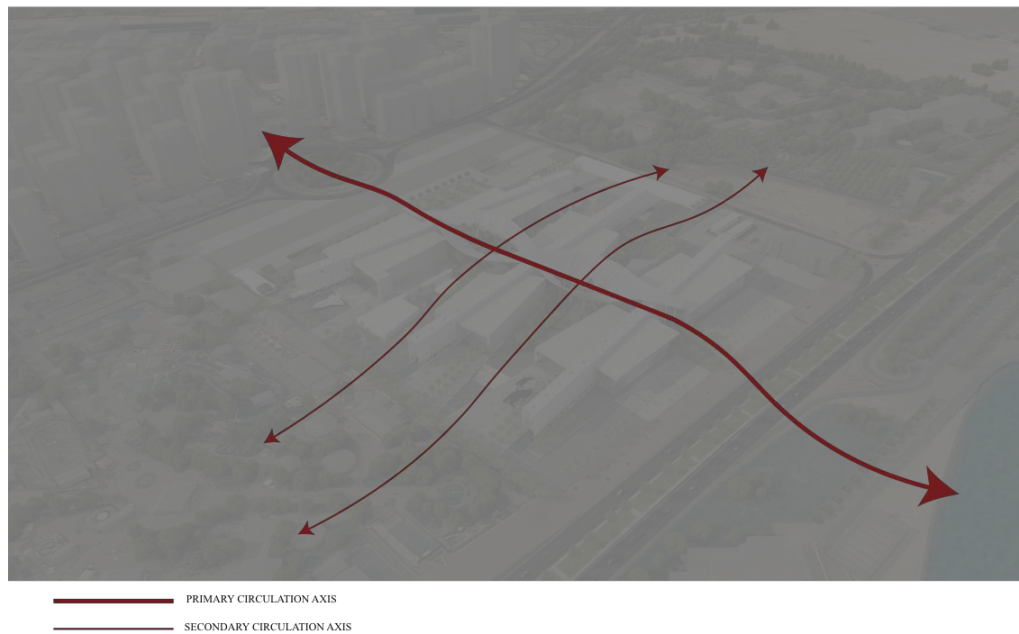


**Figure 69** Islamic cosmic geometric on building façade, source: SSH architects

The elements of the design layout are derived from Kuwait's traditional Islamic city. Elements of the Islamic Bazaar – a permanently enclosed marketplace or street are evident in the design of the center. The Islamic design of the bazaar encompasses a main street with enclosed areas that formed a network for trade. The cultural center begins to mimic this concept. Each building serves a specific purpose – in this case a particular exhibition home. The main street, which ties back to the traditional Kuwaiti 'Ferej' serves as both circulation and access to the different buildings. In addition the strong central axis ties the cultural center with the city on one side, and the Persian Gulf Sea on the other.



**Figure 70** The Bazaar plan in the Islamic world (left) and its imitation in the Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Complex (middle) and building type spaces (right), diagram by Author



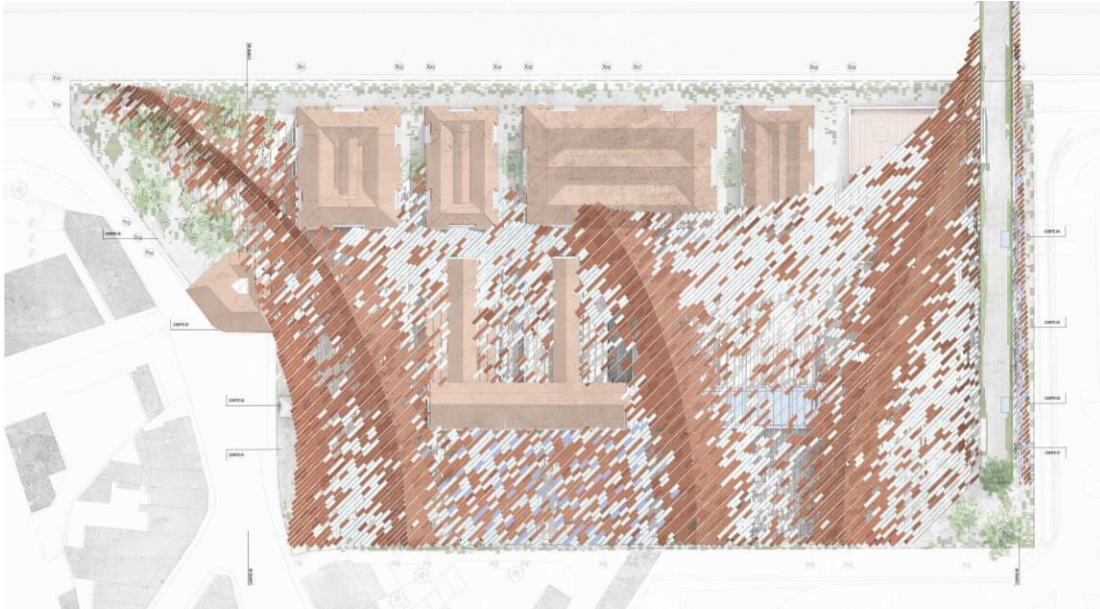
**Figure 71** Dominant axis and view that ties the main centers street with the city and the sea, diagram by Author



### 6.3 Redevelopment of Porto Slaughterhouse to a Cultural Center

**Location:** Campanha, Portugal

**Size:** 5.06 Acres



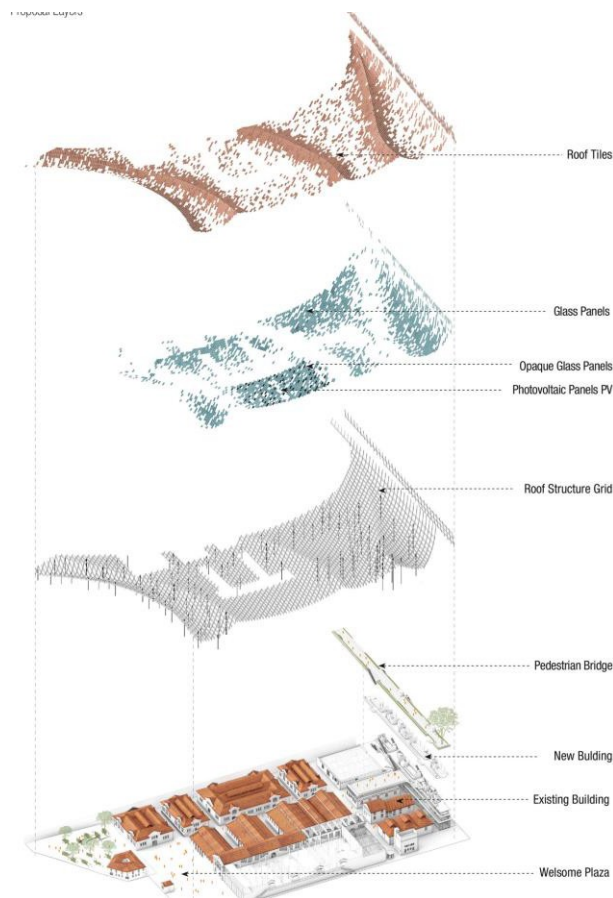
**Figure 72** Site Plan of development by Kengo Kuma, Source: Arch Daily

The project proposal looks to redevelop a once major economic contributor to Porto in the 1950's, into a cultural centre that features a number of art galleries, and a library. The project aims to reconnect the slaughterhouse with Porto and "re-establish the site's importance in the city's cultural, business and social network".



**Figure 73** Section through the site illustrating the canopy structure tying in together the separate buildings under one roof.

As shown in figure 73, the development includes a series of small buildings that inhabit an array of programs (such as museums, art galleries and a library), with a roof structure that stretch's over all of them, throughout the site. The roof structure is meant to have a strong presence from a far, with the roof covered in swatches of red-hued ceramic tiles in a 'visual nod to the material palette of local houses'. In addition the roof is punctured with a number of glass tiles, acting as a second skin for filtering in daylight.



**Figure 74** Exploded axonometric showing the layers of the roof structure



**Figure 75** Interior spaces still showing the essences of the slaughter house through the structure and materiality

#### 6.4 Bibliotheca Alexandria

**Location:** Alexandria, Egypt

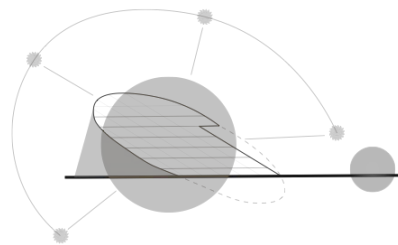
**Size:** 19.76 Acres Site

Situated between the Alexandria University campus and the Shores of the Mediterranean Sea, this development houses both a library and cultural center aimed to celebrate Egypt's longstanding history and commemorate the historical library of Alexandria. The 11-storey library contains cultural and educational functions, and is defined through its unique spatial configuration.



**Figure 76** Bibliotheca Alexandria, Egypt. Source: Google images – glass door

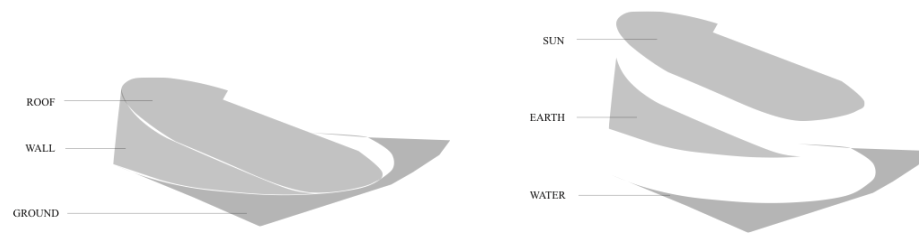
The circular design evokes a key historical element in the history of Ancient Egypt. The sun disc has a number of meanings in Ancient Egyptian mythology and this is portrayed in the design of a circular form. The decision to use the circular form elaborates on the idea of unity and completeness, whilst simultaneously being representative of the astronomical bodies, which were extremely important in Egyptian history (the sun, the planets, etc.).



**Figure 77** The Sun disc adopted from Egyptian mythology and applied to the architectural design concept of the Bibliotheca Alexandria. Diagram by Author



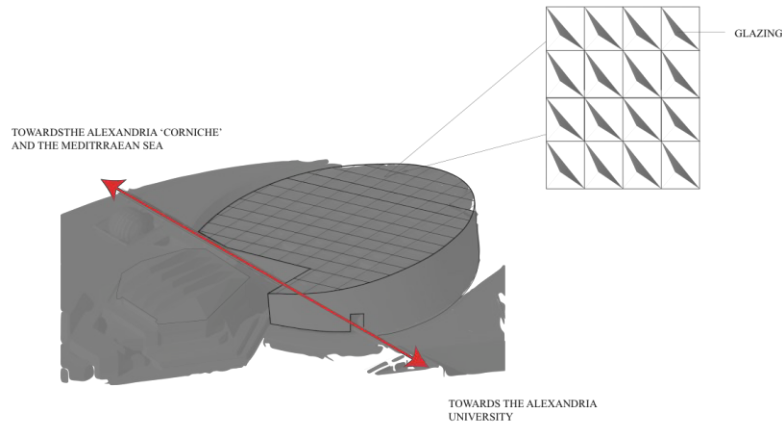
An important design aspect of the building consists of shifting the structure on ground level by tilting it into the ground. Metaphorically this relates to the concept of cutting through the surface which coincides with cutting through time. Time is seen as the 'rotation of the earth in its interplay with the sun, which is described by the horizon interacting with light, while the surface of the actual ground one walks upon represents the present'<sup>52</sup>. Cutting through the ground marks the point the present meets the past and future.



**Figure 78** Another design concept corresponded to Ancient Egyptian Methodology where the connection between the sky, earth and water are essential forces of nature that 'becomes static with the construction of mankind'<sup>53</sup>. This is portrayed in the development of the building. Diagram by Author

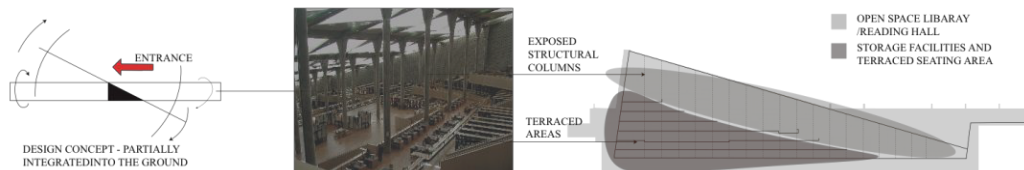
<sup>52</sup> "Bibliotheca Alexandrina Alexandria, Egypt." *Bibliotheca Alexandrina Alexandria, Egypt, The Aga Khan Award for Architecture*, 2001, 1-57.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid



**Figure 79** Access into the library is in the form of a main pathway/bridge that links the Alexandria University leading to the planetarium and toward the cornice, cutting through the complex. The tilted form also allows dramatic views from all directions, particularly the seaside. Diagram by Author

The interior spaces of the buildings are a series of cascading terrace levels, which the roof imitates, illuminated by a 'triangular based, solar sails' roof design that diffuses light, into this open void space to the different level. This provides a uniform ambience throughout the various sections of the Library, predominantly located on the eastern end of the spectrum. The western end of the complex, houses three museums in the library as well as seven research centres, three permanent exhibition areas, galleries and exhibition halls.



**Figure 80** From Concept to Development – the terraced levels of the complex and the structural columns that support the 'solar sails' roof. Diagram by Author

### 6.5 Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

**Location:** Washington D.C, United States of America

**Size:** 9.6 Acres Site

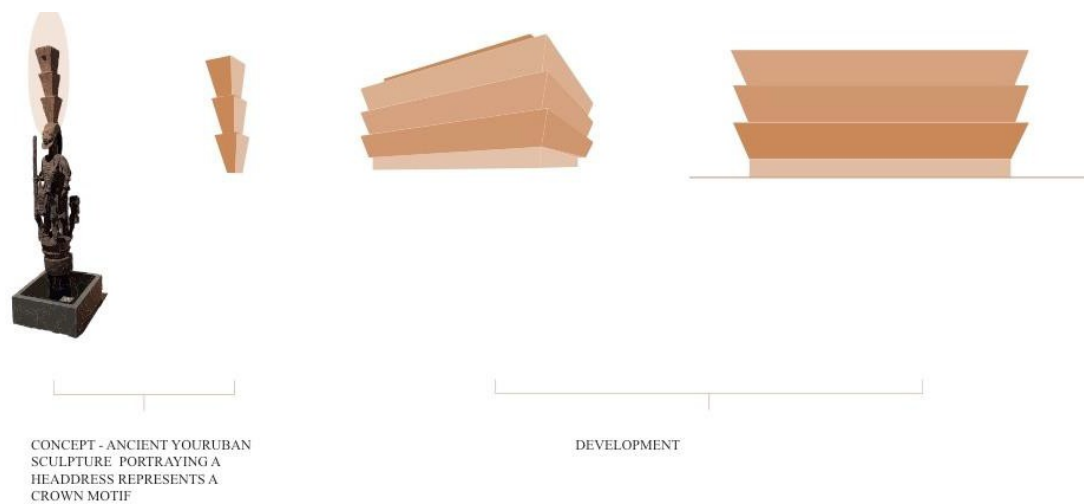
The design of the spatial sequence in this particular building plays to the historical story it portrays for visitors to the Museum. The museum aims to stimulate a dialogue that educates and heals whilst sitting as a monument for African Americans and their history within the United States, and the world.



**Figure 81** the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Source Los Angeles Times

The design concept of the museum is derived from a carved African wooden structure - most specifically a headdress with the same three-level inverted

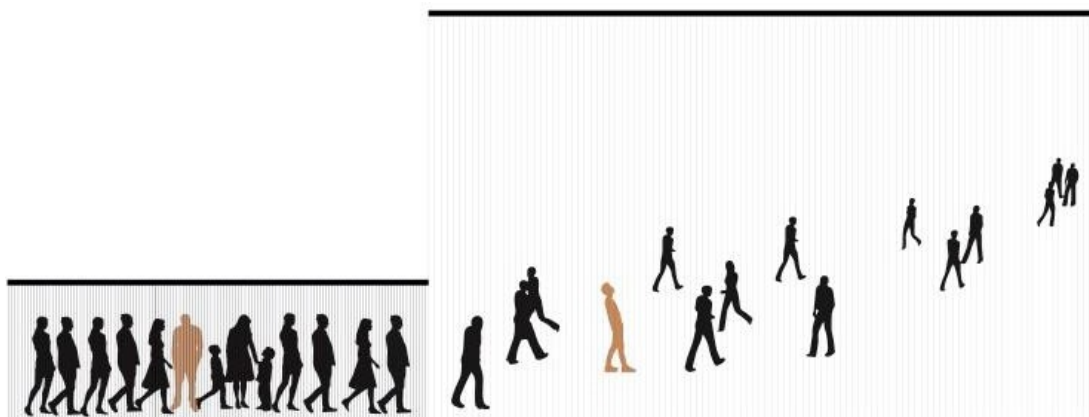
silhouette<sup>54</sup>, elaborated by the building exterior façade and interior layout. The museum sits alongside an array of Smithsonian museums along the mall, framing the view of the monument Washington monument, and standing out for its unique architectural identity. The porch inspired entrance on Madison drive illustrates the home of the slave and the porch being the point of gathering and storytelling.



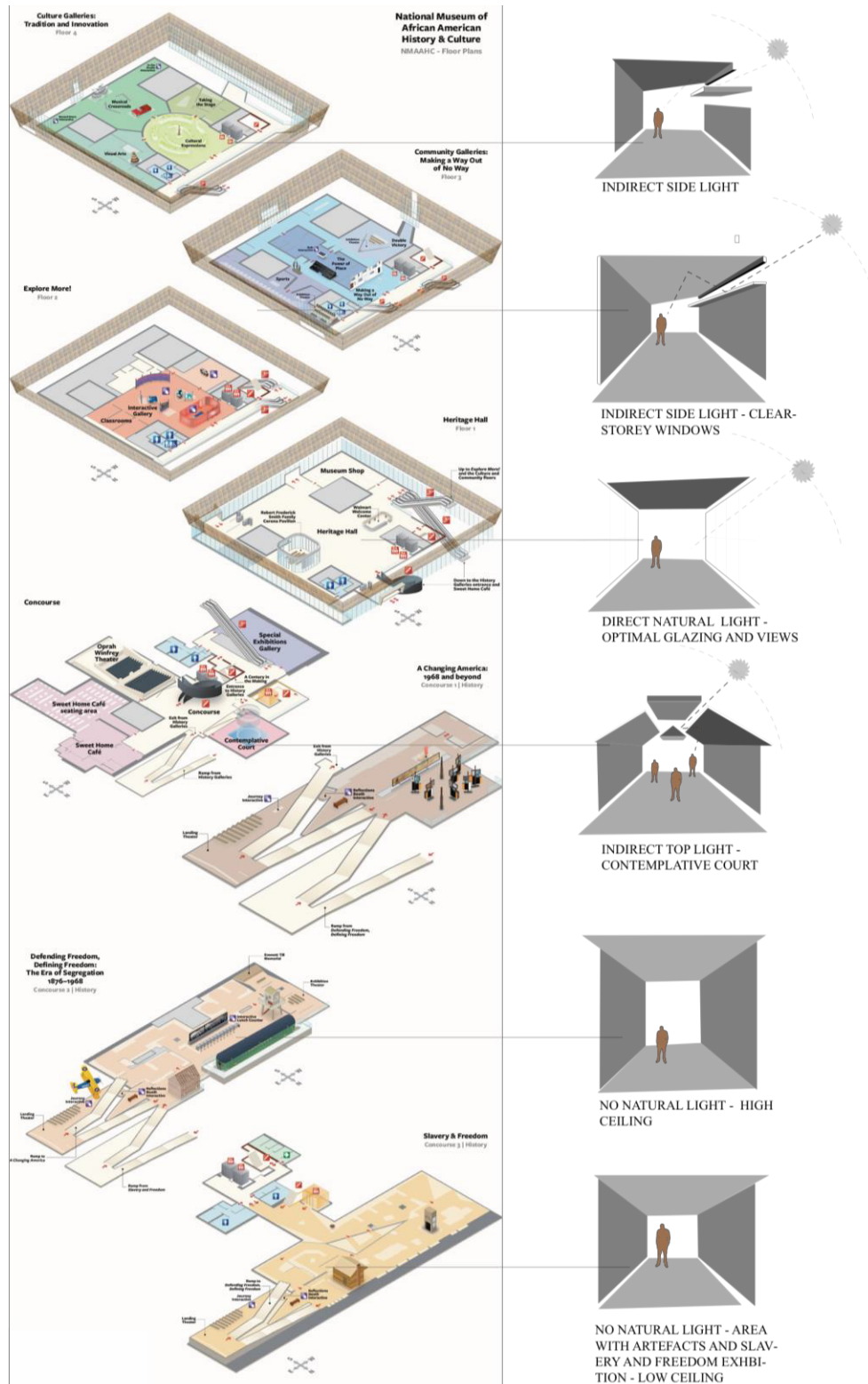
**Figure 82** from design to development – the conceptual design development that is based off the headdress of a Yoruban sculpture. Diagram by Author

The museum is planned to take visitors on a journey that typically begins below ground, from the years of slavery, all the way up to the end of segregation. From the tight, low ceiling ground floor spaces that mimic the years of the Slave trade and the journey faced by the slaves, to the open spaces, high ceiling cultural spaces on the upper floors that offer a feeling of liberation and hope, the interior layout emphasis the experiences and feelings of visitors that take a journey through history.

<sup>54</sup> Shin, Annys. "The Story behind the Design of the African American History Museum." The Washington Post. September 15, 2016. Accessed April 22, 2018. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/the-story-behind-the-design-of-the-african-american-history-museum/2016/09/14/e08b1b4e-4ddb-11e6-a422-83ab49ed5e6a\\_story.html?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.8b135c8d8fd4](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/the-story-behind-the-design-of-the-african-american-history-museum/2016/09/14/e08b1b4e-4ddb-11e6-a422-83ab49ed5e6a_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.8b135c8d8fd4).



**Figure 6** spatial experiences, which mimic the journey from slavery to freedom. The confined, tight spaces represented architectural through low ceilings and narrow walkways open up to a high ceiling and spatial surroundings. Diagram by Author



**Figure 84** Floor Plans of the Museum layout and corresponding spatial experiences created with light openings for both experience purposes and programmatic purposes, Diagram edited by Author.



### 6.6 Skelleftea Cultural Center and Hotel (Expected to be completed in 2019)

**Location:** Skelleftea, Sweden

**Size:** 269,097.76 sqft



**Figure 85** Render of proposal by White Arkitekter of proposed building

Deemed as a model for sustainable design, this timber-frame tower complex cultivates all forms of culture from art, performance and literary organizations sitting alongside each other in a spectacular setting. The Skellefteå Cultural Centre will house a Regional Theatre, Museum, Art Gallery, and a library catered for the city. In addition to cater to the growth of tourist that visit the city and who will visit the complex, a new hotel will be integrated into the complex, providing a source of revenue for the local authority<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>55</sup> Lynch, Patrick. "White Arkitekter Designs Nordic Region's Tallest Timber Building for Skellefteå Cultural Center." ArchDaily. June 09, 2016. Accessed April 22, 2018. <https://www.archdaily.com/789146/white-arkitekter-designs-nordic-regions-tallest-timber-building-for-skelleftea-cultural-center>.

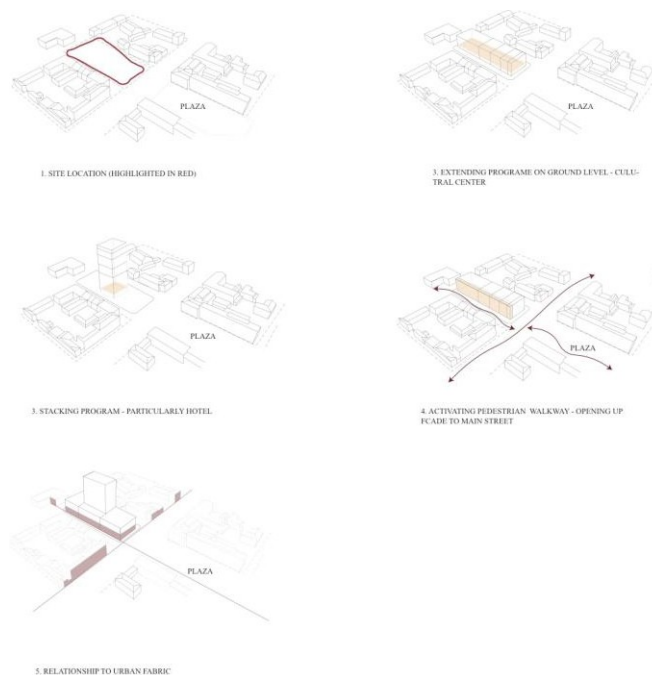


*“The design is a homage to the region’s rich timber tradition that we hope to take forward with the local timber industry. Together, we can create a beautiful civic center for all; a contemporary expression that ages with grace”.*

*- Oskar Norelius, Project Architect*



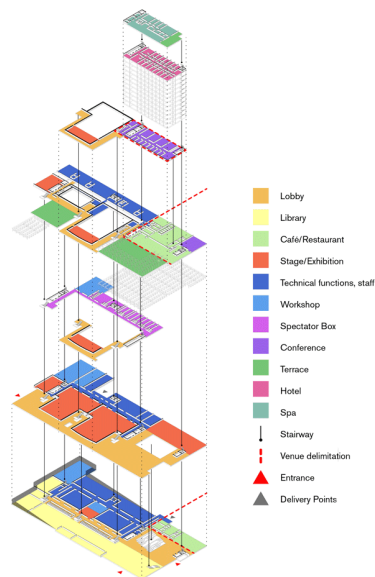
**Figure 86** Site Plan shows the cultural center embedded in a rich urban fabric by White Arkitekter, Source: Dezeen



**Figure 87** Developing a programmatic approach to the center and its effect of the site and city fabric, Diagram by author

The centre and hotel are coordinated to work ‘side by side’ within a single city block. The hotel is placed in the middle of the block without dominating its surroundings, integrated into the urban space, whilst still owning its unique identity and shape through its high volume. The hotel entrance is well integrated with the cultural functions at the ground floor and additionally the reception for both hotel and cultural centre are placed together, reinforcing the idea of two different programs collaborating and co-existing side by side, through physical integration.

*“The proposal shows a transparent way of working by structuring and organising the functions in an elegant manner which is easy to grasp. The “Cultural staircase” becomes the core centre, a challenging generator for new activity, programs and possibilities. The open layouts combined with generous glazing reveal the ingenuity and skill involved in set-building and exhibition installation to visitors inside the building, as well as passers-by outdoors” – White Arkitekter*



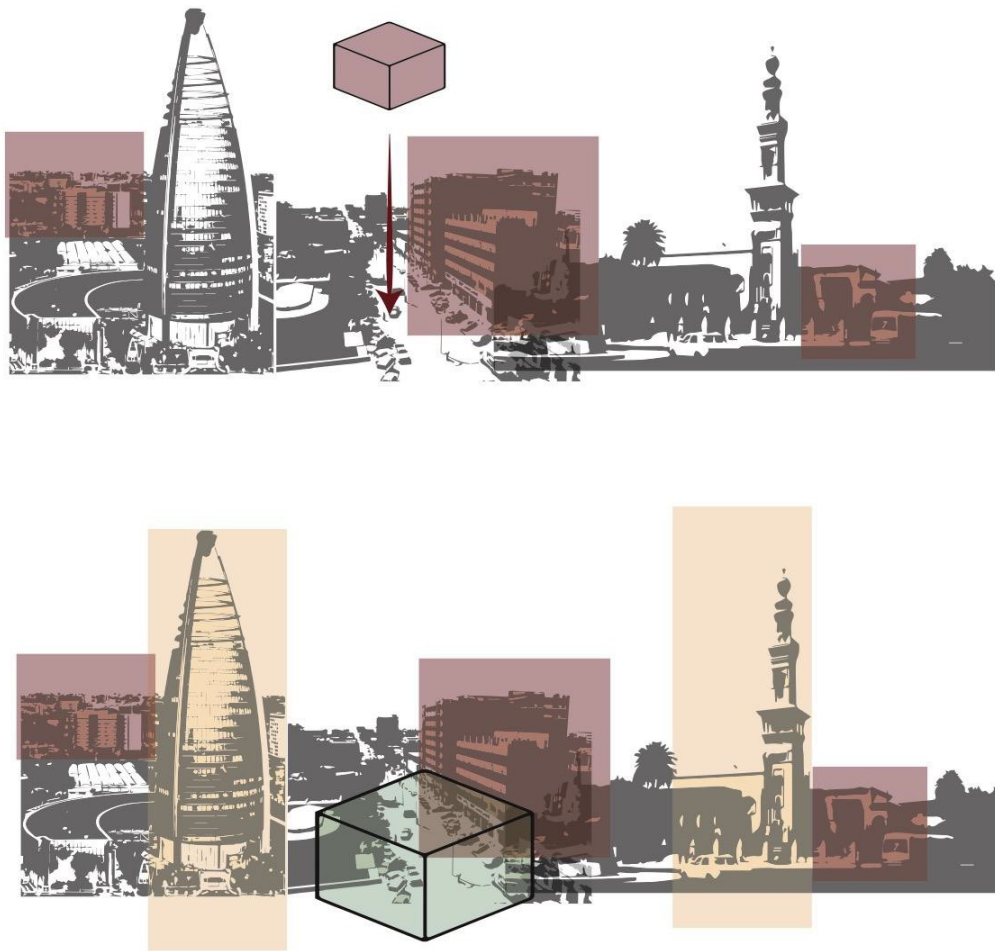
**Figure 88:** Program layout of space by White Arkitekter, based in Sweden: Dezeen.com

The precedent analyses were used to generate design ideas with regards to space making, identity and geographical considerations. These contributed to developing

special building typologies and most importantly recognizing whether the design for the thesis is either:

1. Delicately integrated into the building fabric
2. Stand out against the building fabric and forms an identity unique to the city

Both of these concepts will be explored during the design phase of the thesis.



**Figure 89** Weaved into the city fabric vs. Standing out and forming an identity against the city fabric, diagram by author

## Chapter 7: Program Development

The programmatic approach of the complex ties into the countries highly invested interest in revitalizing the tourism industry. Creating both a destination and an identity for the city of Khartoum, and sitting along the confluence of the White and Blue Nile (one of Khartoum's prominent attractions), the program will comprise of two parts – a hotel that caters to tourists who visit the city as they arrive through the main airport in Khartoum, and a cultural complex that offers an opportunity to discover the hidden treasures of the country and plan their visits to their desired locations.

Analyzing precedents that deliver a similar typology and function to the thesis proposal will begin to influence the spatial size and arrangement for the design proposal. The connection to water and an urban landscape have been highlighted as important site considerations within each project, as well as the spatial sequence created within each of these buildings and the journey crafted from start to finish, that engages the surrounding context of the site.

A key objective for the overall project and program development looks to develop a program and architectural identity that gives way for the complex to be included within the Global Cultural district network. For the past five years, since its inauguration, the Cultural district network seeks to engage and divulge in knowledge sharing on a global scale with those 'responsible for conceiving, funding, building, and operating cultural districts and/or clusters with a significant cultural element'<sup>56</sup>. The organization eludes to having a platform for discussion with regards to managing

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<sup>56</sup> "Home." GCDN. Accessed May 18, 2018. <https://gcdn.net/>

and governing a cultural center, the content and program alliance – which this thesis will use as a guide line for the design framework, the animation of public spaces; the role of large scale cultural anchor institutions in districts and an array of other topics. Most importantly however, is with the parameters used, as guidelines to help to further iterate the goals of the thesis – placing Sudan’s cultural and historical significance on a global platform and shifting the paradigm with what the country has to offer on a global stage

## 7.1 Program Matrix

CULTURAL COMPLEX				HOTEL			
ROOM/SPACE DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	SIZE (SF)	TOTAL	ROOM/SPACE DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	SIZE	TOTAL
<b>EXHIBITION, CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SPACES (PUBLIC)</b>				<b>PUBLIC</b>			
Reception Hall	1	3000	3000	Lobby/Entrance	1	750	750
Exhibition Hall 1	1	2,500		Restaurants	2	3000	6000
Exhibition Hall 2	1	1,500		Retail Spaces	2	1400	2800
Exhibition Hall 3 - Funj	1	1,500	11,500	Lounge	2	750	1500
Exhibition Hall 4 - Ottoman	1	1,000		Ballrooms/Special occasion	1	8500	8500
Exhibition Hall 5 - Mahdiyya	1	2,500		Restroom - Male	1	520	520
Exhibition Hall 6 - Colonial	1	2,500		Restroom - Female	1	520	520
Cultral Galleries- Music	1	800		<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>20590</b>
Cultral Galleries- Art	1	500	2,700				
Cultral Galleries- Literature	1	800					
Cultral Galleries- Religion	1	600					
Workshops/Classrooms	5	350	1750				
Temporary Exhibit Space	1	1,000	1000				
Restrooms - Male	1	520	520				
Restrooms - Females	1	520	520				
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>20470</b>				
<b>COMMON SPACES</b>				<b>PUBLIC/PRIVATE</b>			
Lobby/Entrance Space	1	1500	1500	Meeting Rooms - 1	1	750	750
Gardens/Landscaping	3			Meeting Rooms - 2	1	425	425
Amphitheater	1	450	450	Gym	1	1350	1350
Auditorium (750 seats)	1	6000	6000	Pool	1	850	850
Lecture Hall	2	300	600	Spa	1	1000	1000
Restaurants	2	3500	7000	Prayer Room	2	250	500
Café	3	1500	4500	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>4875</b>
Library	1	7000	7000				
Retail/Gift Shops	4	800	3200				
Restrooms - Male	2	520	1040				
Restrooms - Female	2	520	1040				
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>32330</b>				
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>				<b>PRIVATE</b>			
Office Space		3500	3500	Guest Rooms - Single	45	365	16425
Meeting Rooms	2	650	1300	Guest Rooms - Deluxe	65	484	31460
Storage Rooms	1	350	350	Guest Rooms - Executive	35	753	26355
Waiting Area/Lounge	1	600	600	Guest Rooms - Private Suite	15	1033	15495
Staff Locker Rooms	2	450	900	Private Lounge	1	1200	1200
Pantry Room	1	400	400	Office Space	4	130	520
Restroom - Male	2	520	1040	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>91455</b>
Restroom - Female	2	520	1040				
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>9130</b>				
<b>PARKING &amp; SERVICES</b>				<b>SERVICES</b>			
Accessible Parking	300	144	43200	Lifts	4	36	144
Standard Car Parking	23	198	4554	Fire Escape Stairs	1		
Bus Station	1			Storage	2	300	600
Loading Dock	1			Power Room	1		
Power Room	1			Parking			
Storage	3	300	900	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>744</b>
Small Elevator	4	36	144				
Service Elevator	2	99	198				
Fire Escape Stairs	1			<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>117664</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>48996</b>				
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>61930</b>				
			<b>110926</b>				

Figure 90 Program Matrix, author

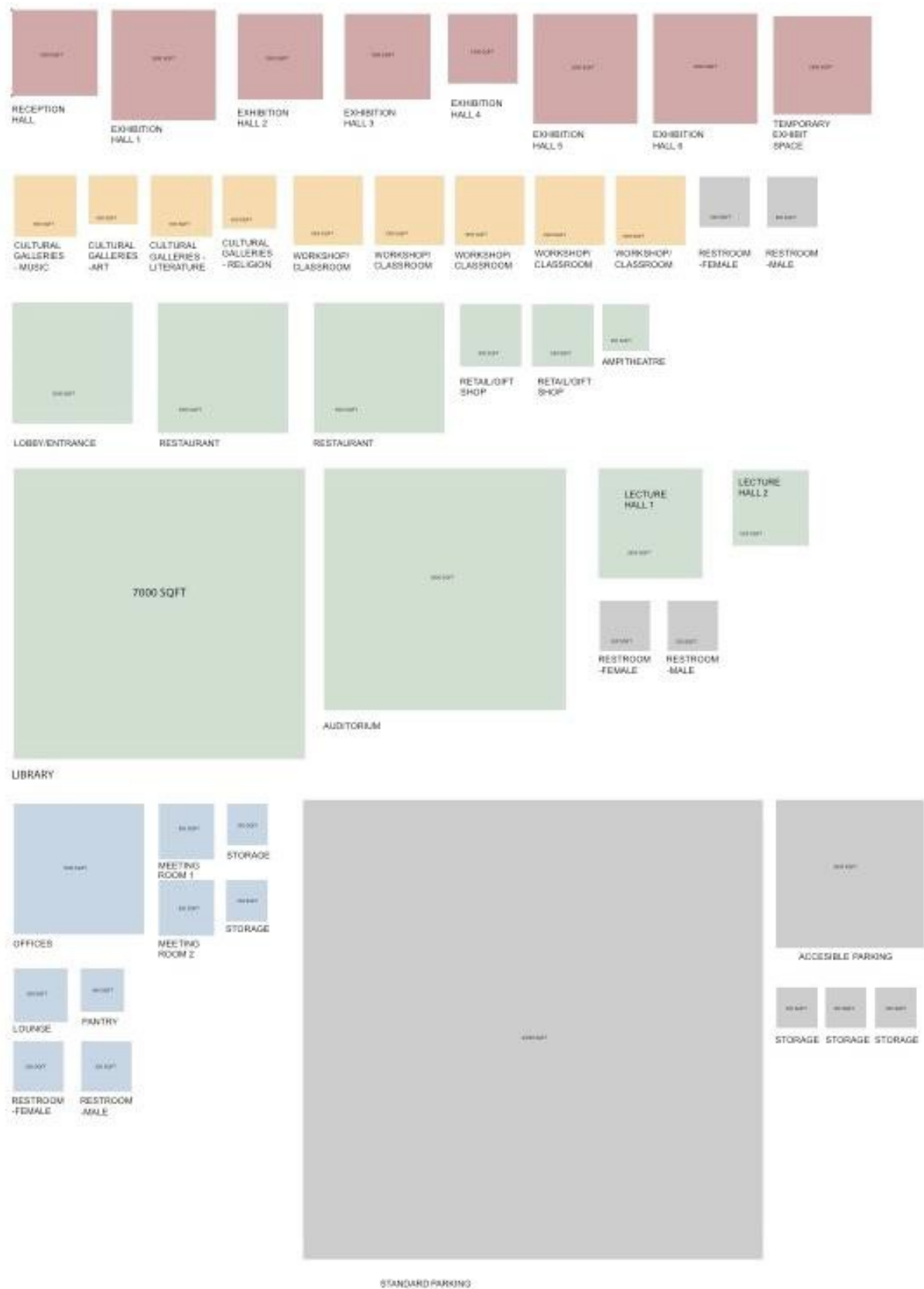
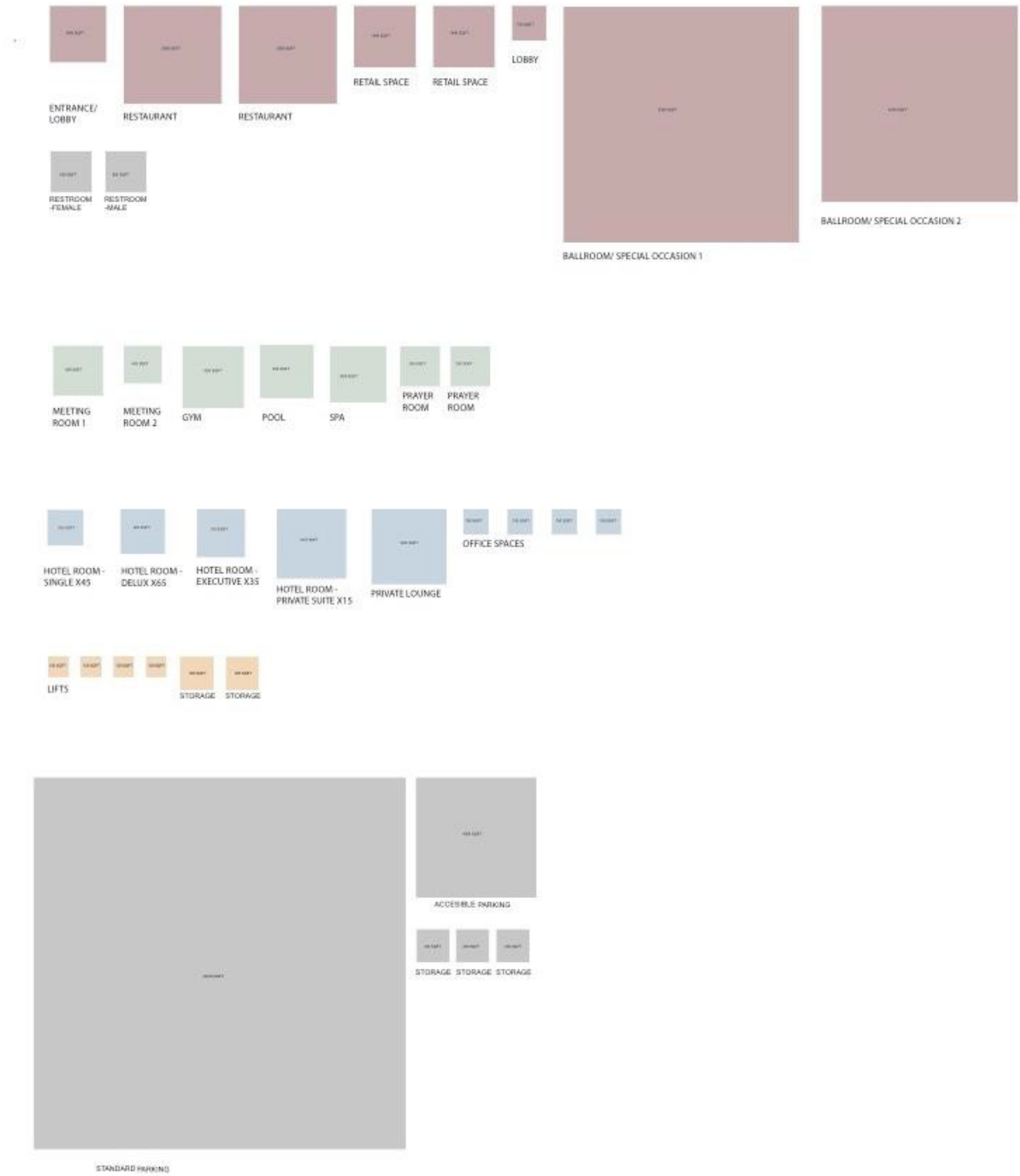


Figure 91 Cultural Complex Programs

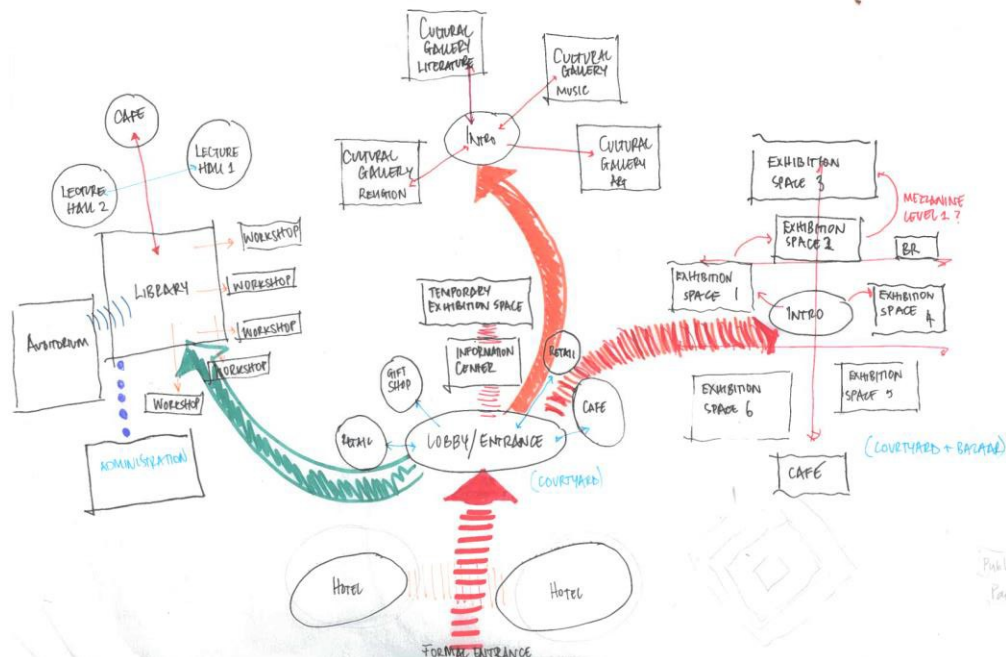
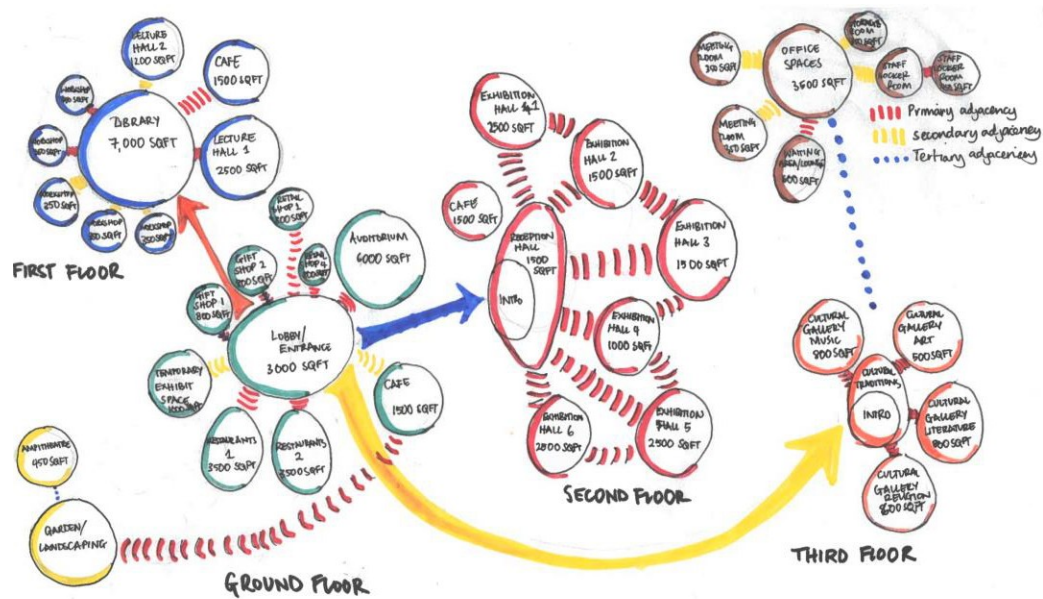


**Figure 92** Hotel Program



## 7.2 Spatial Diagrams

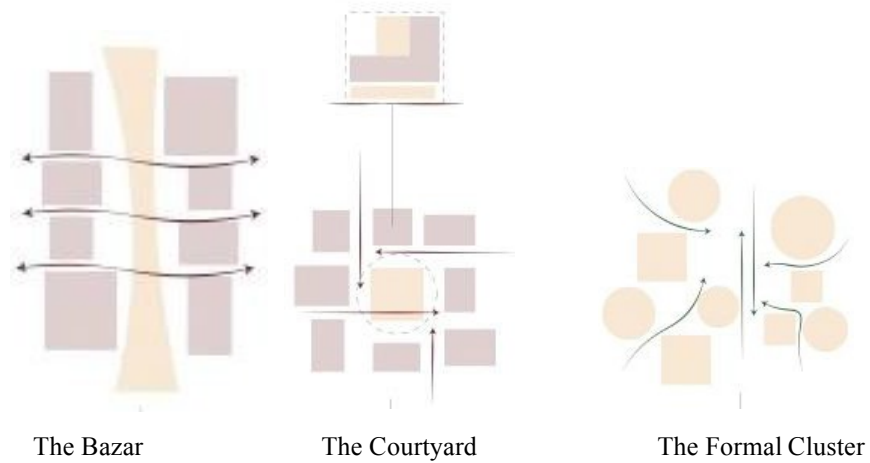
Spatial diagrams were then developed to visualize how the spaces worked in conjunction with one another. These diagrams were then used to develop an initial massing program base on three typology concepts derived from the research into; Cultural Tourism, the history and context of Sudan.



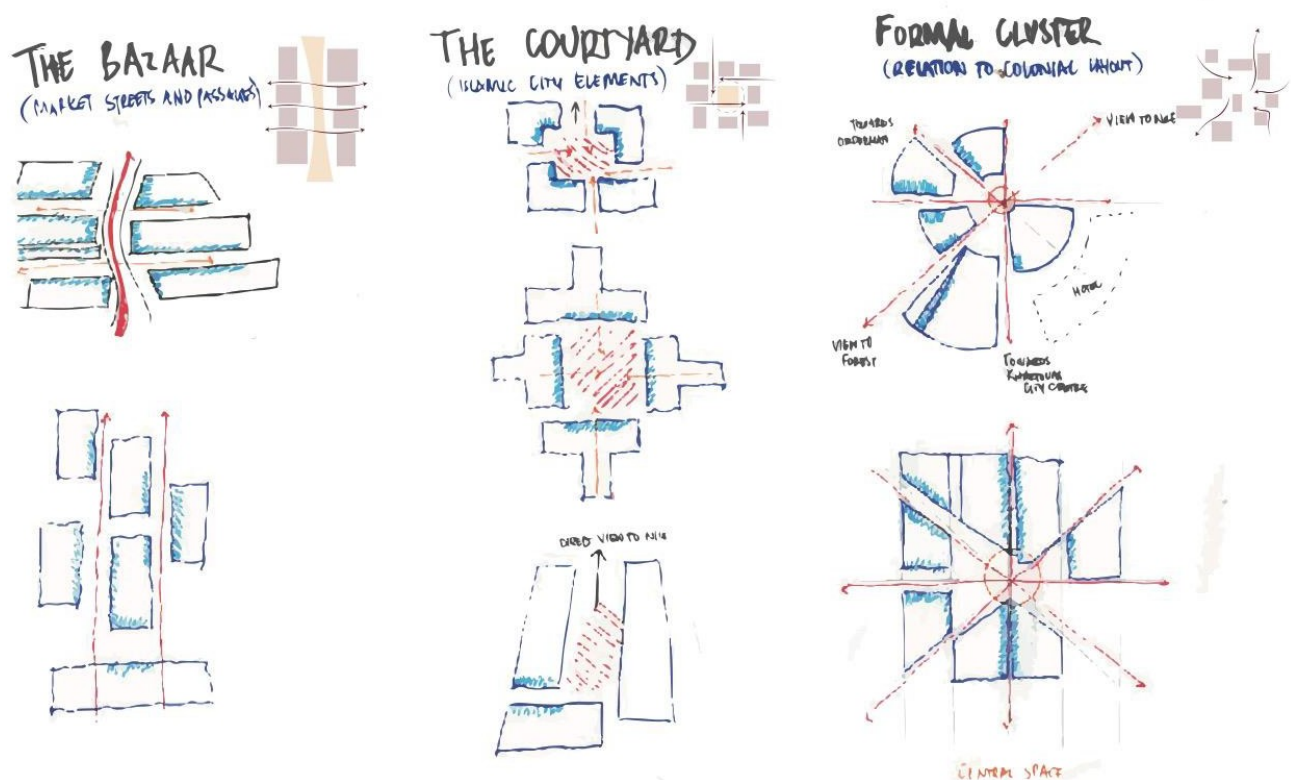
**Figure 93** Spatial Diagrams Source: Author

The three typologies developed from the research portion of this thesis were used to configure different massing plans that were arranged on the site. These three typologies were:

1. The Bazaar – looking at the formation of a ‘public street’ that engages the buildings to this central space. The bazaar is can become enclosed similar to the way it is in the precedent analysis of the Sheik Abdullah Cultural Center and become its own spatial experience that reflects the city of Omdurman and its vibrant street and market.
2. The Courtyard – Reminiscence of the Islamic city elements particularly found in Northern Sudan and in Omdurman, where the public space (which may include a monumental figure) was signified as the place of importance and the residential building where built around it. This concept is also reflected in houses of the individual, creating a private space amidst a public one.
3. The formal Cluster – Referencing the British colonial period, particularly in Khartoum, where the urban fabric was laid out on an iron grid, but clusters of residential, commercial and institutional spaces were formed and connected but a series of orthogonal streets, giving ways to ‘clusters’ of buildings that were grouped together in the heart of the city.



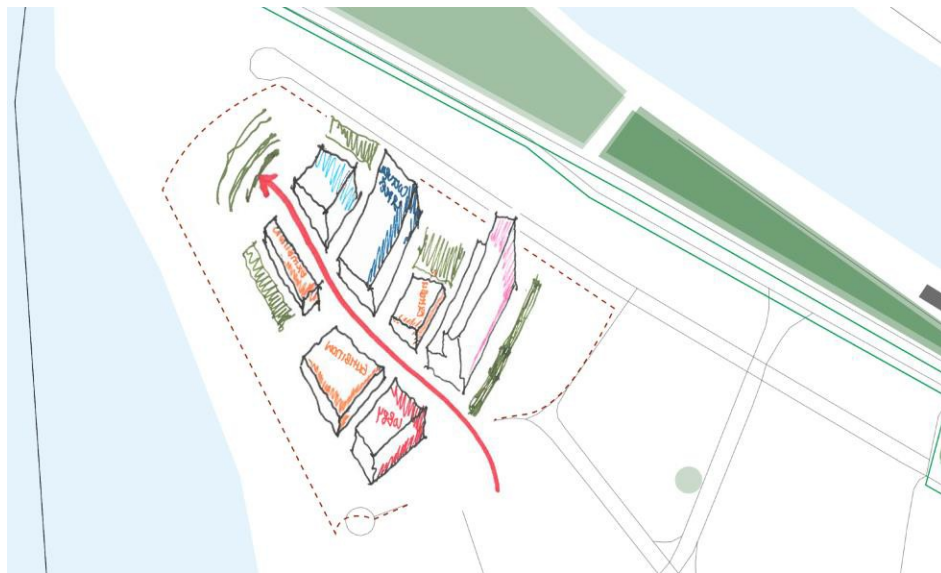
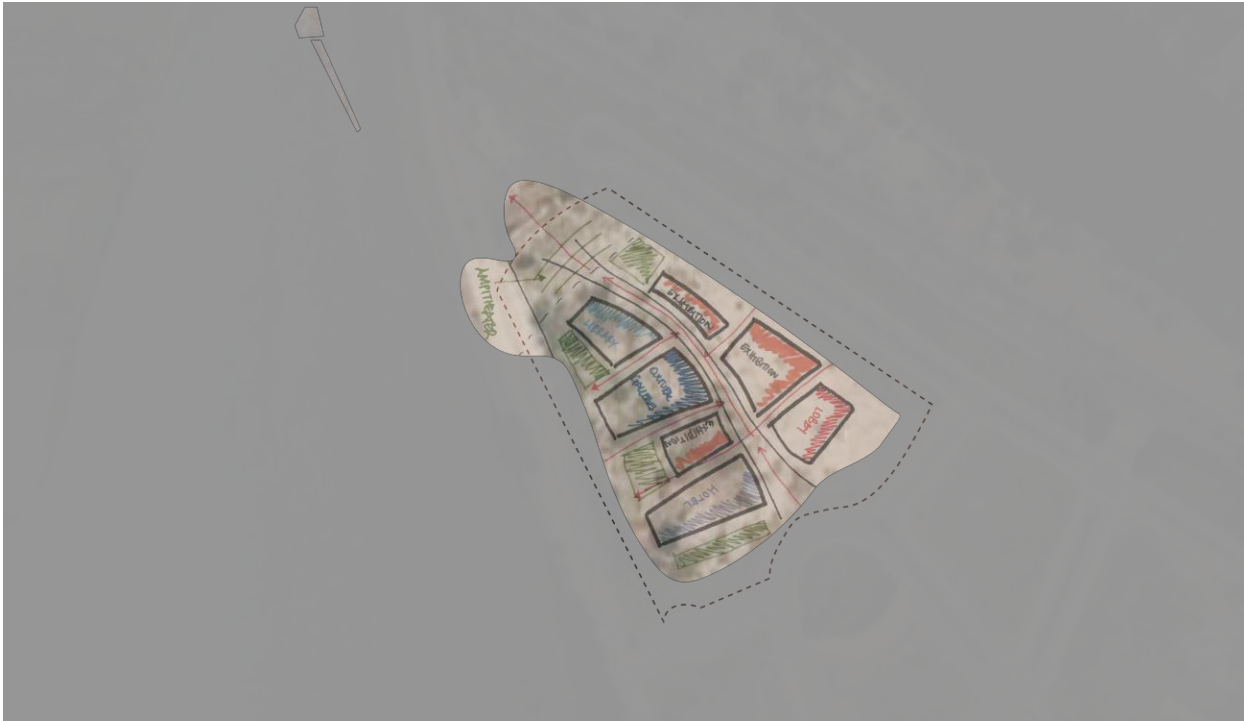
A series of configurations were developed as a result of these typologies analyzed.



**Figure 95** Scheme development based upon building typologies, diagram by author

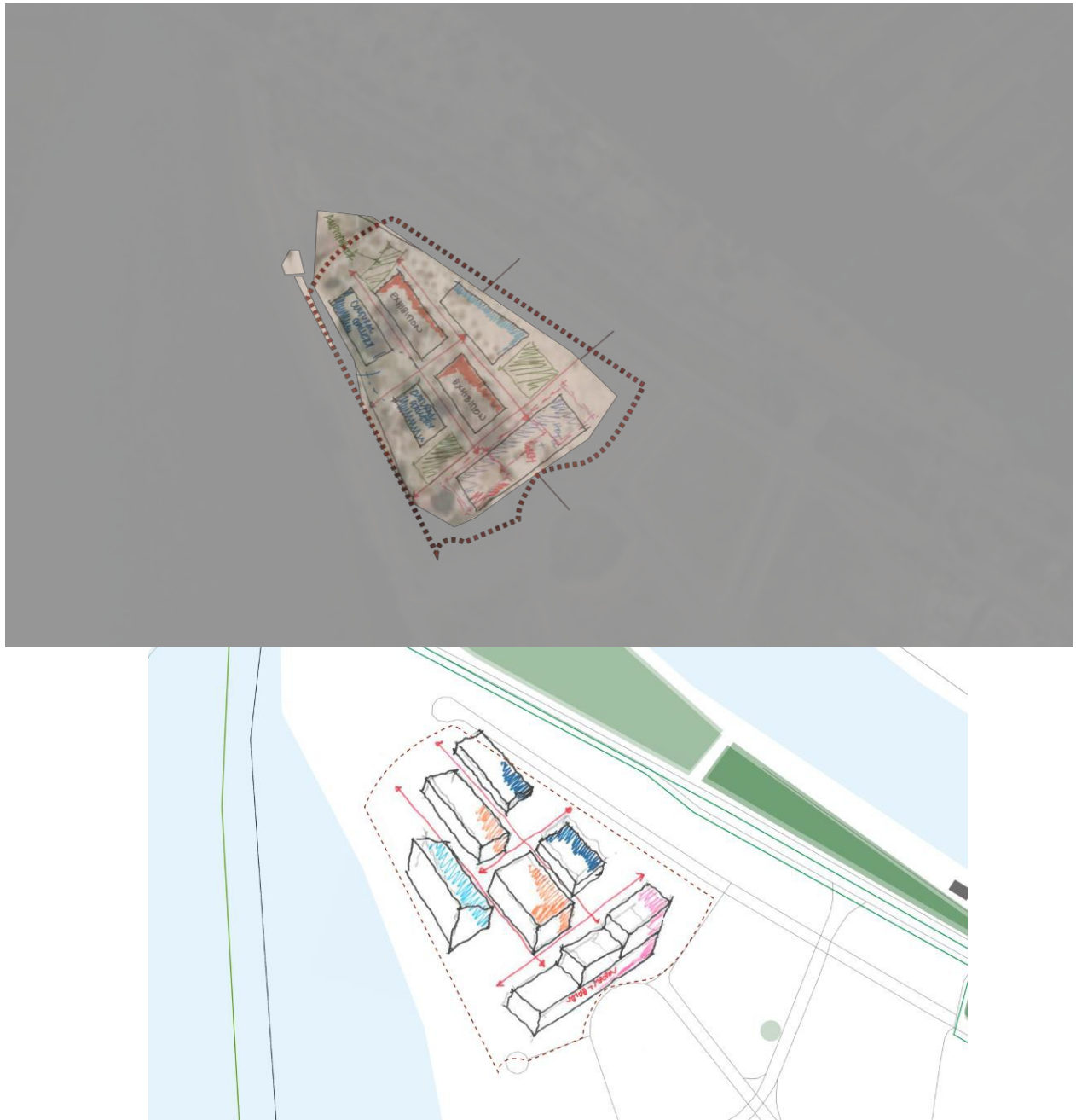
### 7.3 Program Massing

1. The Bazaar Scheme 1 – A main street through the site, that connects with the urban fabric of Khartoum, and heads towards the Nile. A series of buildings with specific programs lay along each side.



**Figure 96** Bazaar Massing Scheme 1 Diagram by Author

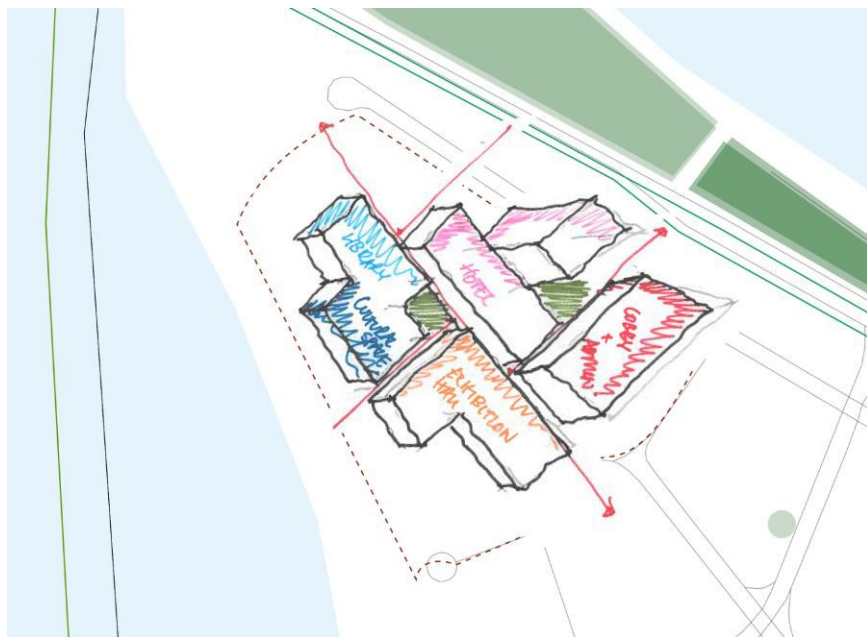
2. The Bazaar and Grid Scheme 2 – Two main streets, separated from the street that allows access to the site, by a main building. A series of buildings are arranged along the side of the street, giving the experience of an urban city block.



**Figure 97** Bazaar Massing, Scheme 2 Diagram by Author



3. The Courtyard – A central private space, with buildings orientated around it.  
Smaller courtyard spaces are also made between each building.



**Figure 98** Courtyard Massing, Scheme 3 Diagram by Author

4. The Formal Cluster – A series of interactions between each building that create tight pathways, central spaces and a ‘clustered’ experience. Smaller buildings are anchored to larger buildings and connected through program.



**Figure 99**, Formal Cluster Scheme 4, Diagram by Author



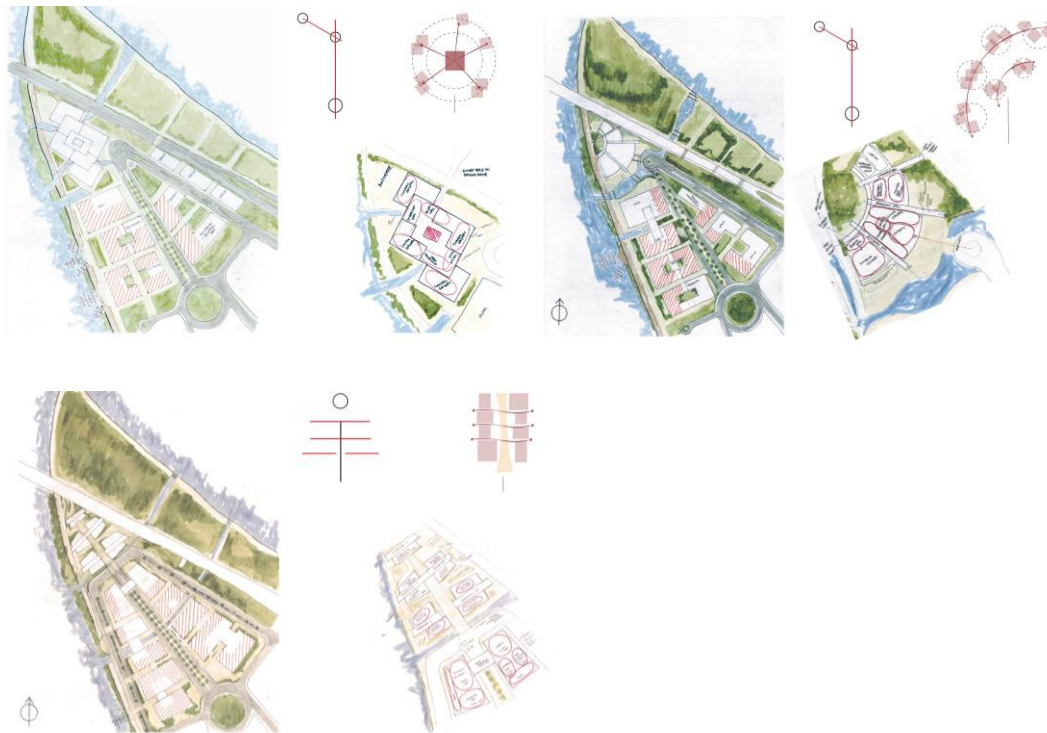
The schemes developed reflect the programmatic approach to creating a cultural complex and hotel. However, reflecting upon the site in terms of location and market potential, the proposal will look to expand the program to create in essence a Cultural district, which will include residential and office elements, looking at the project as an urban development of a group of building uses, with the Cultural center at its heart. This will be explored further in the design phase of the thesis.

## Chapter 8: Design Development

### 8.1 Scheme Exploration

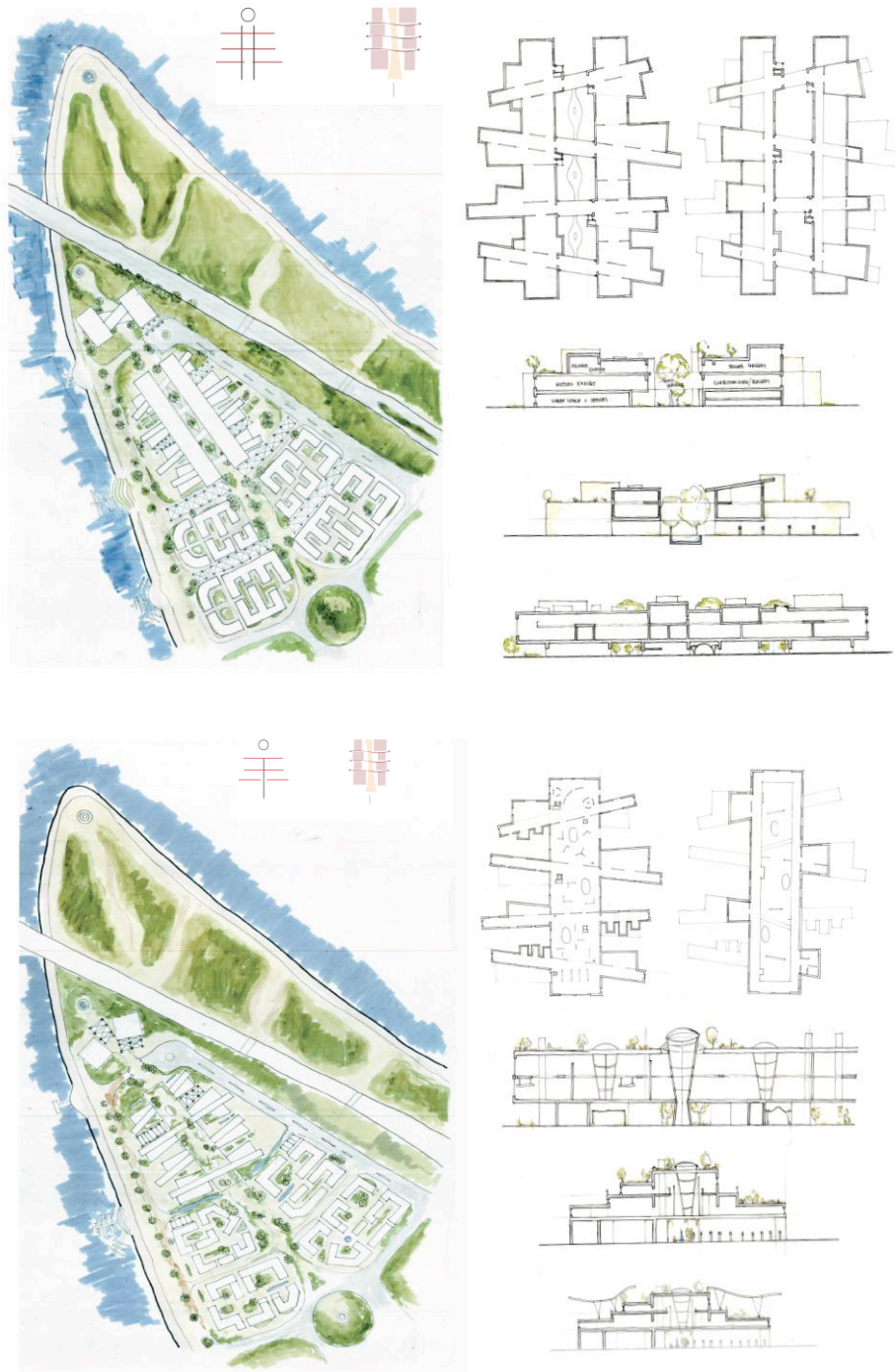
#### *An iterative design process*

During the design process a number of schemes were developed based off the precedents researched and building typologies analyzed. The site explored three specific programs, the Hotel, the cultural center, and a residential/office component. The goal was to create a cultural district that would be in constant use, and open to both the tourist and locals. Through a series of sketches, models and vignette's the design concept went from developing three large, separate programmatic spaces to intertwining these with one another to create a landscape that builds off each space.



**Figure 100** Early design scheme exploring different parts, connection to water, and placement of the different types of buildings (Cultural, Residential and Hotel), Source: Author

Earlier schemes suggested that the cultural center be placed at the tip of the site, mimicking the idea of a jewel that is found after traveling past the busy residential and hotel zones. In exploring the scheme, and addressing the site from a real estate development prospective, the design shifted from having the cultural center at the end of the site, to creating an iconic hotel, which would stand as an icon for the city at the end. The development site is also regarded as prime real estate, and in creating a development that was feasible in its nature, the hotel needed to be situated in the prime location (at the tip overlooking the old city, and the confluence of the two Niles), to support the development of a large cultural center. In addition the hotel could be designed to frame the old city (within which it overlooks), and the cultural center would become the journey taken by visitors from the hotel, through a timeline of the countries past, ending in its presenting and looking out to the future, with the residential portion of the master plan folding into the urban fabric of the new city (which consists of high rise buildings). Exploration of this scheme can be seen in figure 101.



**Figure 101** Scheme A (top) Shows the hotel at the tip of the site, with the cultural center in the middle, with two district bars connected at specific points, and an open pedestrian pathway in between, connecting you from the residential area, to the end of the site at the hotel. Scheme B, from again shows the cultural center in the middle, but one bar, elevated housing the cultural center, with smaller pavilion like structure housing other programmatic activity, other than exhibits and galleries. Source: Author

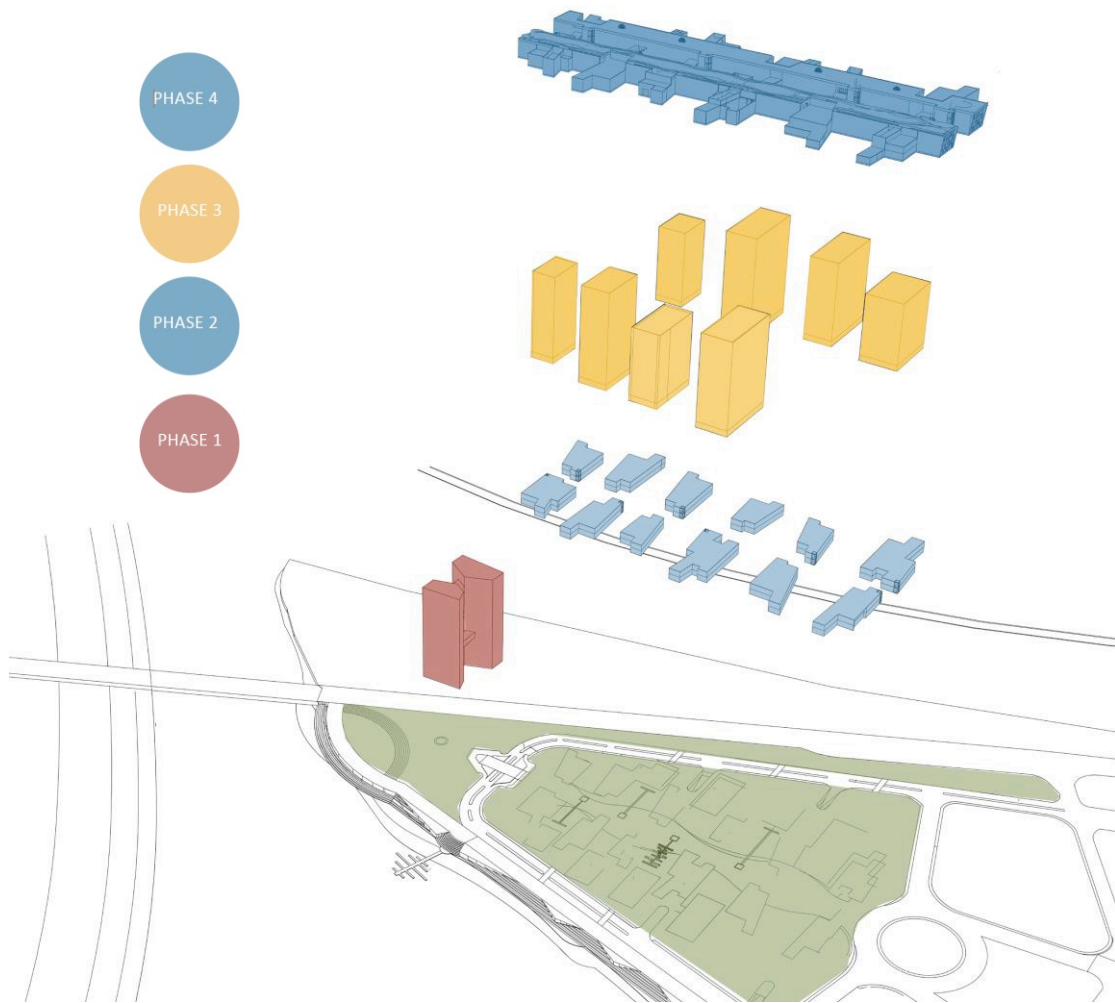
In developing the scheme, the proposal developed from creating three separate zones to using the ideas learnt about cultural tourism and the importance of crafting a space, or in this case a district, which was in use during all times of the day and year, and not only for one specific purpose. In addition, the Real Estate development aspect had a large hand in focusing the development of the thesis in becoming a project that is feasible and takes into account the larger programmatic elements (the hotel, cultural center and residential buildings) working together as a system of parts, to create a district that celebrate culture and house the history and place of the country and its people.

## 8.2 Design Development



**Figure 103** Ariel View of Cultural District

The master plan for the site evolved from the concept of ‘emphatic and behavioral insideness, as describe in the concepts of outsideness to insdieness when discussing place and space, by Edward Relph. The cultural bars creating an upper level canopy that weaves the ‘lived in spaces’ (in this case the residential buildings and the hotel’ with the visited spaces. The intersection of cultural spaces with the residential spaces also creates smaller courtyard spaces that create programs related to both the tourists and native.



**Figure 104** Exploded axonometric showing the different layers and phases of the district

The districts has a number of layers that's interact and create secondary and tertiary space, other than the more obvious, formal spaces. The Ariel view in figure 103 shows the Cultural bars, a closed space creating an open pedestrian pathway, which mimic the concept of an urban street – high rise structures on either side (in this case the cultural bars, and residential buildings) and a pathway that leads you from one end of the site to another. The exploded axonometric view shows the different layers of the district and the proposed phasing strategy for development.

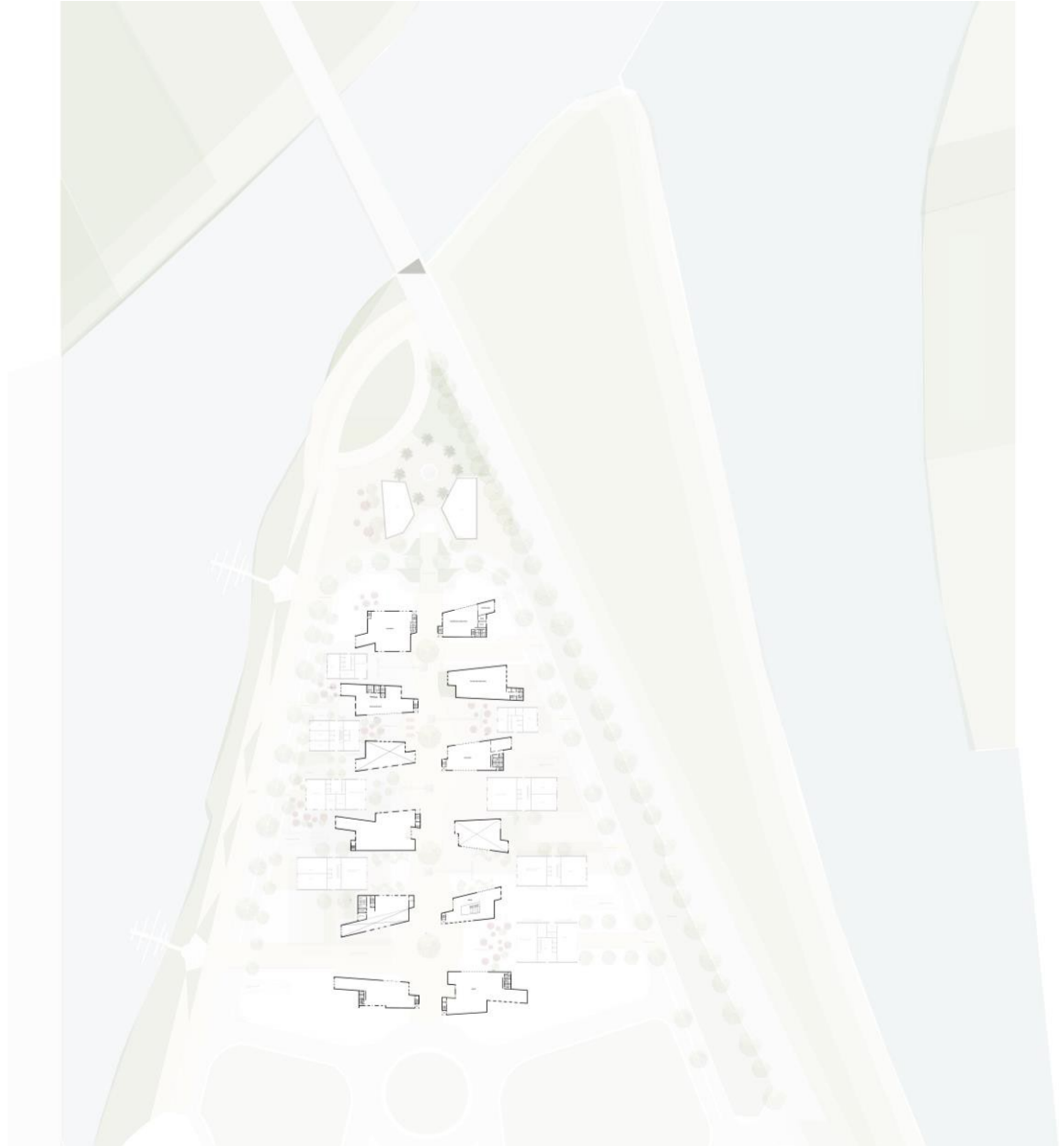


*Design - Cultural Pavilions, ground floor residential spaces and hotel*

The ground floor is made up of a series of cultural pavilions as seen in figure 105. These pavilions include a diverse range of programs, ranging from an information center, Auditorium, theatre/studio spaces, eco craft manufacturing and artist workshop spaces, restaurants, retail space and a library. These pavilions are designed to be interactive and used by all visitors, but also be operated by the locals. The programs are independent of the actual cultural center, so that people can choose to spend the day pursuing specific activities that may not necessarily involve entering into the cultural center and hotel.



**Figure 105** Ground floor Master Plan



**Figure 106** First floor plan

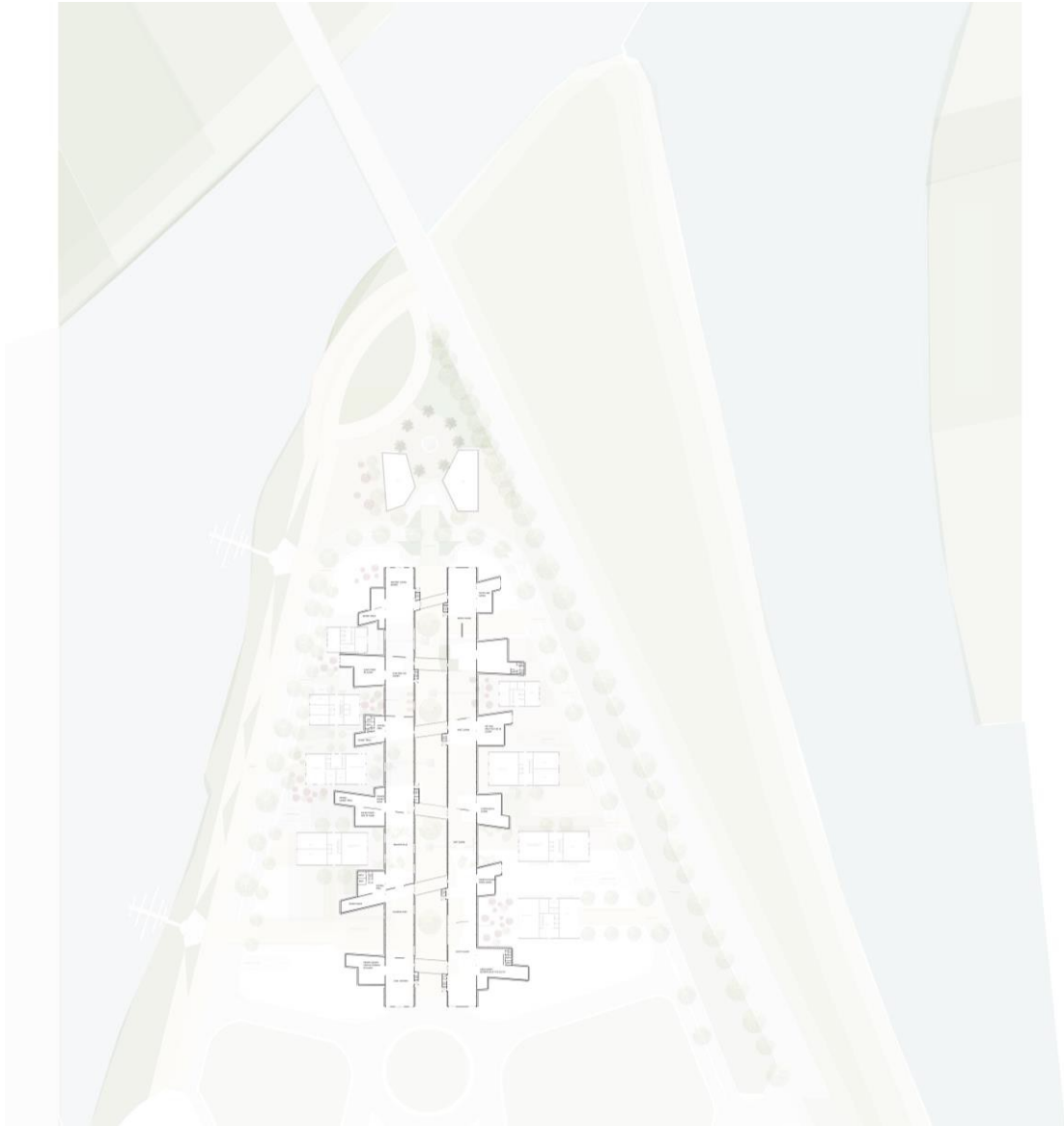
Additionally, these ground floor of the residential areas, with the cultural center create these inner private courtyard spaces that you are able to enter off of the main promenade or through smaller inner pedestrian streets. The courtyards contain functions related to the program of the buildings that enclose them, but also mimic the earlier building typologies in Sudan that were researched, or clusters of building

placed in a group to form inner courtyards. A detailed drawing of these spaces can be seen in Figure 107. A series of Pavilions and ground floor residential spaces form courtyards that include an herb garden, which can be accessed from the food production pavilion, eco craft manufacturing pavilion, and the space within the residential building used to hold cooking classes. The second courtyards space is an outdoor café and vendor space.

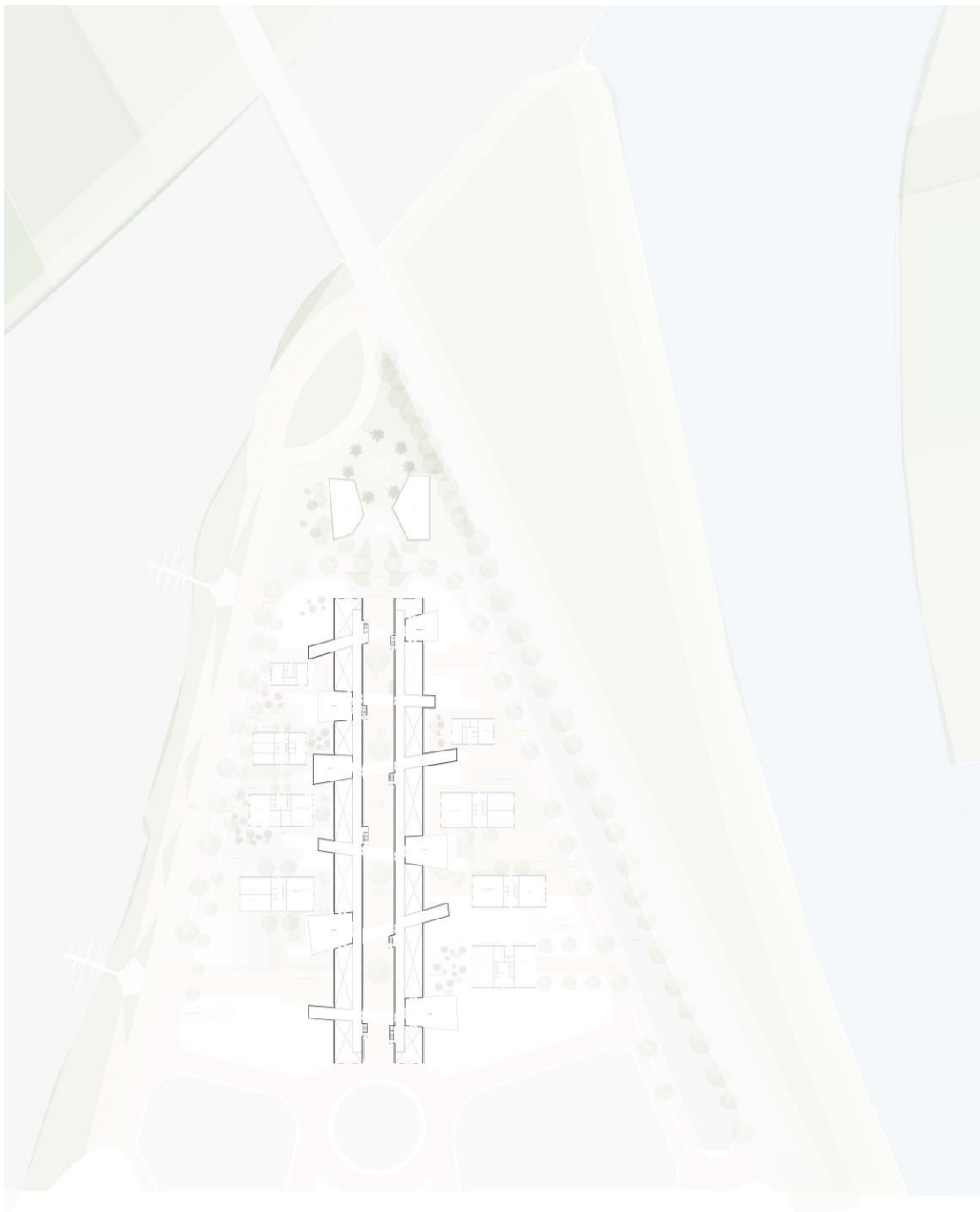


**Figure 107** Detailed spatial configuration of the pavilions, residential ground floor and courtyard spaces

*Design - Cultural Center*



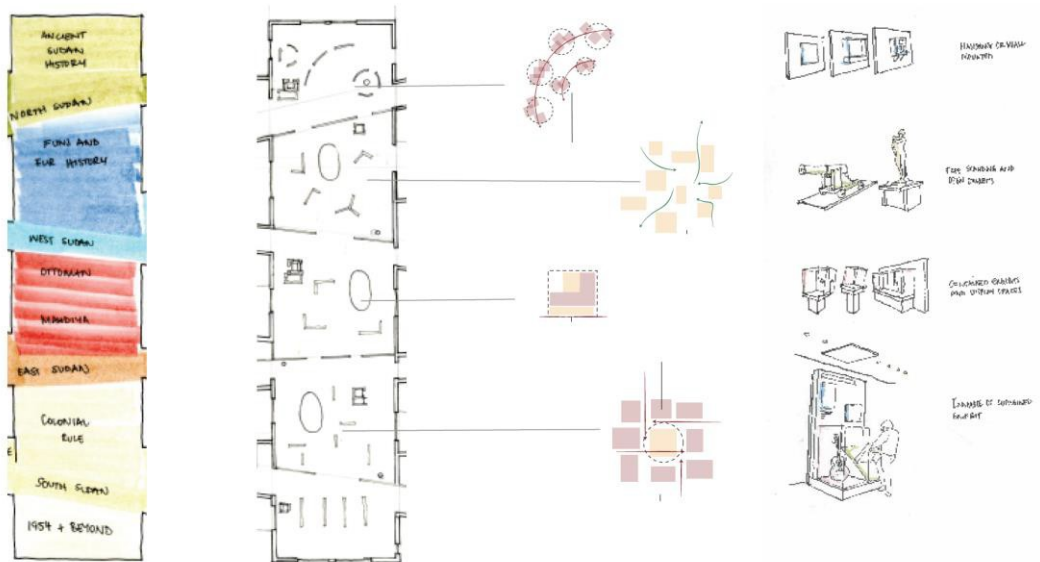
**Figure 108** Second Floor, Cultural Center



**Figure 109** Third Floor - Mezzanine Level

The cultural center consists of two bars that span across the site, creating a strong presence throughout the district. One bar (on the left) houses exhibits and galleries regarding the historical timeline of the country. The second bar (on the left)

is a series of cultural galleries that express the culture of the different regions of the country, showcasing the music, art, architecture, literature and traditions of the people and their regions. The glass bridge links are then designed to connect the two bars together, representing the moments in time within which the history of the country (specifically the political history) began to influence and create the culture and traditions of the specific regions. The diagrams illustrated in figure 110 are meant to convey the organization of the spaces on the interior, specifically for the historical bar where the timeline of the country coincides with the sequence of the exhibit. The building typologies of the specific region within the time also begin to appear in the orientation and display of the exhibits.

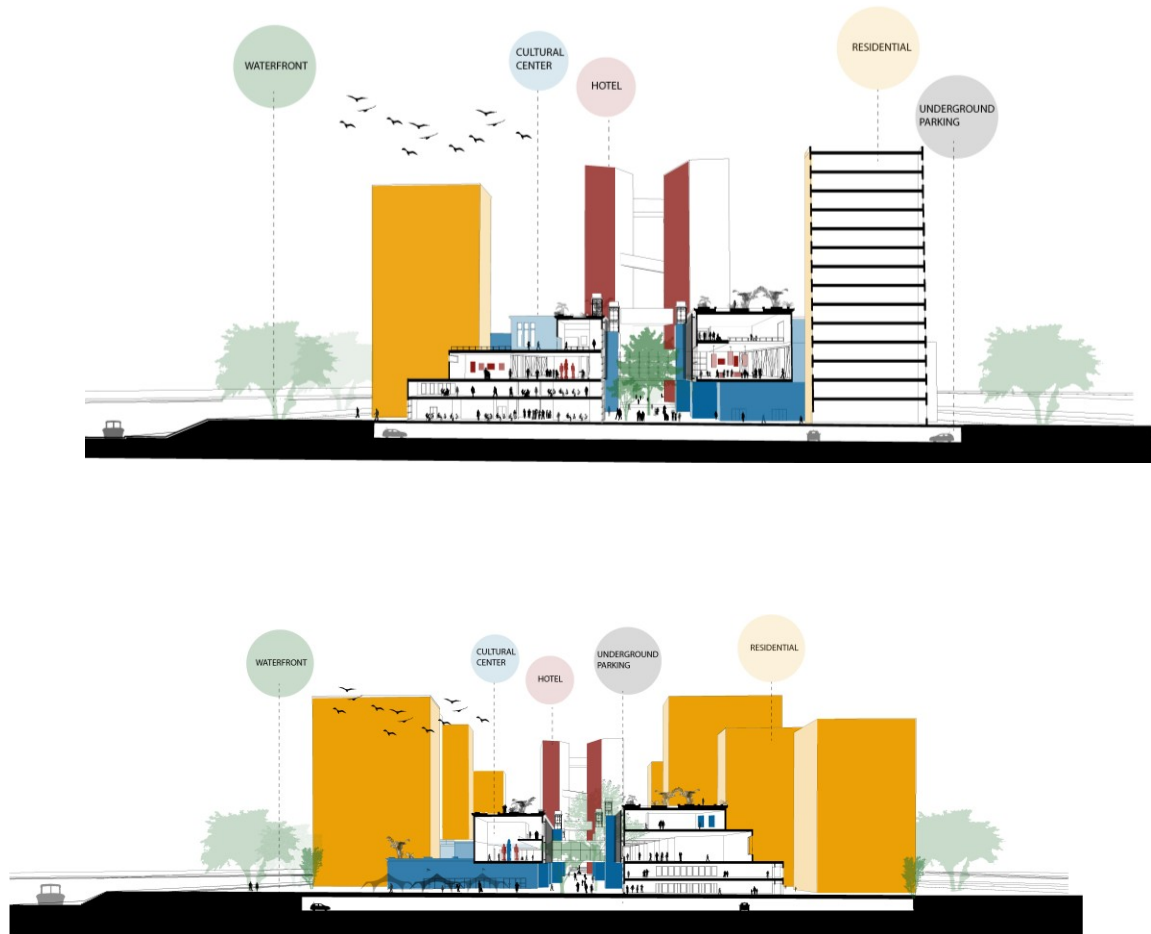


**Figure 110** Diagrams showcasing interior layout of exhibits that mimic the building typologies of the different regions of Sudan



## *Design – Green Roof/Park*

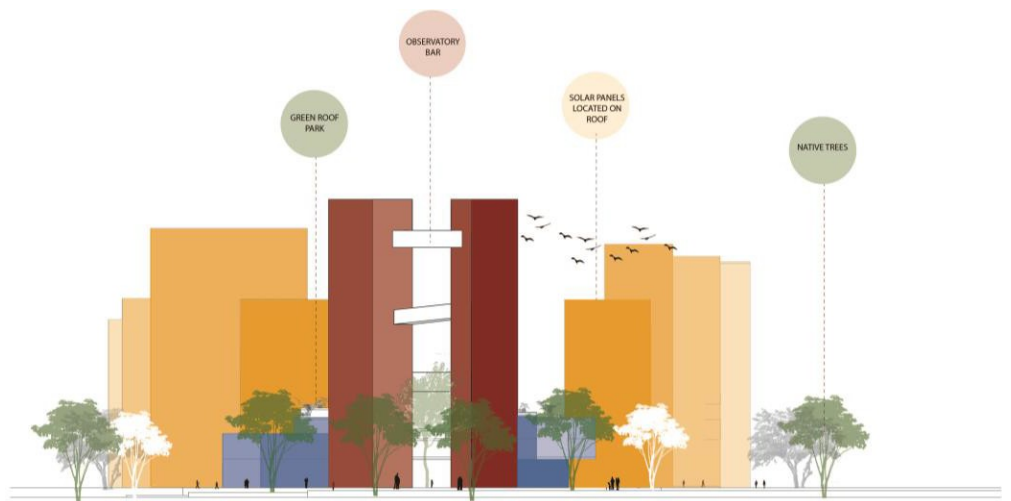
The green roof/park is accessed on the roof of the cultural center. A green roof/park was important for this thesis as it wanted to address the need for more green spaces in the city. As more people move into the city, green spaces are being traded in to create higher rise buildings to house the growing population. Thus more high-rise buildings are being built, one strategy is to also design green spaces that are elevated.



**Figure 111** Section Perspectives



**Figure 112** Longitudinal elevation



**Figure 113** Diagram showing sustainable strategies within the district

In developing the cultural district, plans were found for the additional development of two transit systems, which the Sudanese government are in the process of potentially implementing. These two transit systems include the return of a tramway system that stems from Omdurman to Khartoum, and stops by the proposed site development for the Cultural district. The other is the proposal for a water taxi system. As part of the Cultural district proposal, this water taxi system would connect the proposed development with other parts of the city, and the new proposed airport in Omdurman. This would also serve as another tourist activity, where visitors could enjoy the journey across the two Nile to their preferred destination. Figure 114 illustrates the transit system pathways for both the water taxis and the tramways.



**Figure 114** Water transportation plan (left) and proposed tramway plan (right)

### *Experiencing the District – Perspectives*

Experiencing the district differs for each type of users. For the purposes of the thesis three types of users were used to describe their experiences through the site. These three users were the following: A local Sudanese citizen, Mustafa, living across the White Nile in Omdurman, a member of the Sudanese Diaspora, Yara who visits Sudan frequently from London, and a tourist, Aiden, who is visiting from Washington, DC for the first time to learn about the history and visit a number of archaeological site.

#### *The Local's experience (Native), Mustafa*

Upon approaching the cultural district, Mustafa is keen on spending his time in a specific area, rather than wander through the whole site. He is an avid cook, enjoying the process of growing fruit and herbs and teaching a cooking class within the district. When he is not teaching, he enjoys planting and growing fruit and herbs within the herb garden, and enjoying his daily coffee within the seating area of the garden. Towards the end of the day he proceeds to the pedestrian promenade where he enjoys the daily entertainment put on by different tribal dance groups, and people selling goods.



**Figure 115** Herb garden, looking into the eco craft manufacturing workshop pavilion



**Figure 116** Pedestrian Promenade



*The Diasporas experience, Yara*

Yara is visiting Sudan, as she does every few years, to visit family. She is keen on learning more about Sudan's rich history, but even more so the many different tribal traditions of the different regions of the country. She enters from the main pedestrian promenade, after being dropped off at the main entrance to the site, opposite the roundabout. There she is welcomed onto the pedestrian promenade by a group of people who are watching a tribal dance from East Sudan. She proceeds to enter the cultural center from the information center pavilion, up the glass elevator, and into the Cultural bar. There she visits the different galleries and exhibits where she learns about women in Sudan, as well as music and dance in the different regions of the country.



**Figure 117** Entry onto pedestrian promenade (from the main roundabout)



**Figure 118** Cultural gallery - Exhibit on Women in Sudan



**Figure 119** Cultural Gallery - Music and Dance in Sudan



*The Tourists experience, Aiden*

Aiden's first point of contact with the district is the hotel where he will be staying for the first few days of his visit before touring different regions of the country. He begins his journey through the cultural center by starting at the very beginning of the timeline – Ancient Sudan. His first point of interaction is the exhibits on the Nubian Empire. A key element in this part of the exhibit is the orientation and alignment of the Nubian statues. Mimicking the arrangement and orientation of the Pyramids of Nubia, skylights are used to allow sunlight into specific points of the exhibit, whether the statues are highlighted. In this case the skylights are arranged to be orientated similar to that of the pyramid – following the orientation of the sun. This can be seen in figure 120.

He studies this point in history working his way through the time line till he arrives at the exhibits about present day Sudan. He then moves through the bridge lines into the Cultural galleries, where he takes in the view of the hotel and the promenade beneath him, before he begins his tour of the cultural spaces of the four regions of the country.



**Figure 120** Ancient Sudan exhibit



**Figure 121** Glass bridge link between the Historical bar and the Cultural Bar, looking out towards the hotel

### *Market Space*

Visitors to the district who may wish to take the water taxis to and from the site are welcomed by the vibrant market space that allows locals and tourists to enjoy the essence of a Sudanese souk. Food, artifacts and souvenirs can be sold here by locals and allow the different types of users to meet and converse with one another. This becomes one of the first stages of creating an empathetic and behavioral insideness as described by Edwards Relph is design for space and place, for the native and the tourist.



**Figure 122** Market space/souk

### *Conclusions*

Sudan's history and culture is complex in its origins and in its formation. Through a series of events and a diverse background that stems countries far beyond the country's borders, this thesis began as a means to celebrate the diverse culture and history the country has to offer. It was equally important throughout the thesis process that its culture and history was reflected as a means to alternate the conversation about Sudan and what it has to offer on the global stage in the form of tourism, most specifically cultural tourism.

As the country continues to grow in the number of foreign visitors it attracts to its cities, and the city of Khartoum starts to construct more high rise buildings to emulate those of metropolis cities, the thesis looked at creating a design development proposal that not only housed the history and culture of a space, but provoked and intimate relationship between the past and a rapidly urbanizing, modern future.

The integration of the dual degree allowed for the thought process behind the design development to be feasible, innovative and in the long term profitable. These factors heavily influenced the development of the final master plan proposal, and subsequently helped in developing a phasing strategy that considered the overall development as a series of parts that depended on each functioning independently first, to succeed as a development project overall. A financial proforma was run on the hotel development, the first phase in the development project, which project returns high enough to sustain a minimum of a 10 year hold period, an in turn encourage the development of the cultural pavilions, cultural center and residential buildings in the following years.

### *Public Presentation*

The public presentation provided a great platform for exchange of ideas and positive critiques. The idea was intriguing and there were positive comments regarding the concept and the reasoning for a thesis such as this. There were many thoughtful critiques about site choice, which divide some of the critics, but a very prominent critique was regarding the scale of the cultural bars and whether they needed to be these mega structures that span across the whole site, or whether the pavilions alone, were enough to foster the concept of cultural tourism, as they created intricate, clear courtyard spaces, that were independent of the main promenade.

Some of the critics were adamant that the project continued to be developed and evolved, with an emphasis placed on focusing more on the architectural detail on the cultural centers (specifically the bars) – in particular specifying materiality of the façade. Some comments suggested at looking to develop the water front even more, looking particularly at how the users can begin to interact with these spaces from the water, on either side of the site, and creating a more visual link between the old city of Omdurman, and the new developing city of Khartoum.

The critics thoughtfully laid out their ideas and showed a real interest and excitement for the project. It is the author's aspiration that this thesis proposal will not end with the final public presentation, but continue to evolve into a well-defined

potential business model in the upcoming years. As Sudan heads into a new era of self-development and opening of its doors to the international community, the author hopes that the proposal will one day play a pivotal role in helping to bridge the gap between Sudanese culture and tourism, and in doing so, expose the wide-range of benefits in which cultural tourism can bring to both the Sudan and wider global community.



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